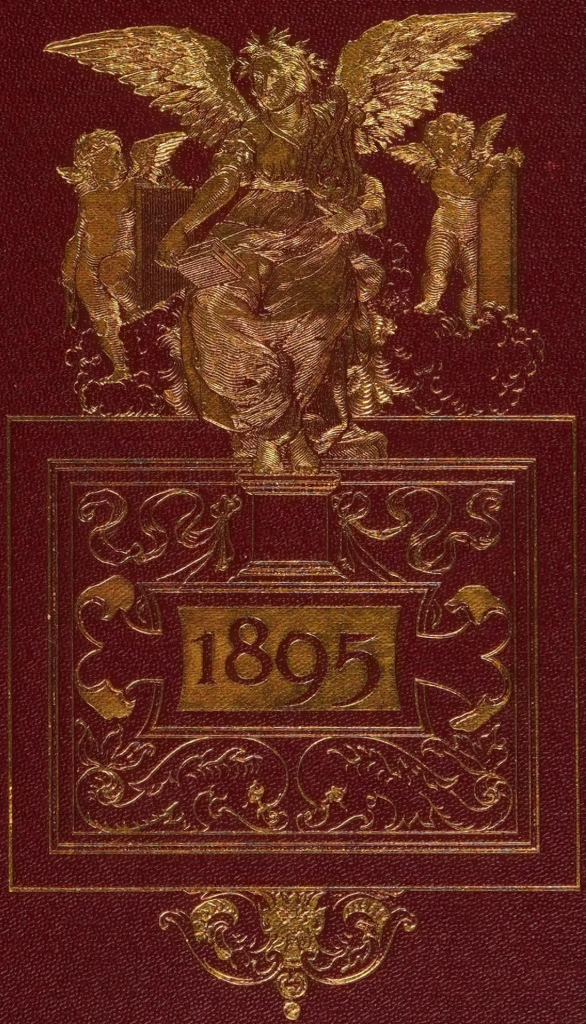
UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
39001024113899

THE PORTFOLIO



N
1
P8
v.32
1895

THE

PORTFOLIO

MONOGRAPHS ON ARTISTIC SUBJECTS
WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS

WILLIAM BLAKE
By R. GARNETT

THE RENAISSANCE OF SCULPTURE IN BELGIUM
By O. G. DESTRÉE

GERARD DAVID
By W. H. JAMES WEALE

LONDON
SEELEY AND CO., LIMITED, ESSEX STREET, STRAND
NEW YORK: MACMILLAN AND CO.
1895

USEUM GALLERIES

WILLIAM BLAKE

PAINTER AND POET

By

RICHARD GARNETT, LL.D.

Keeper of the Printed Books in the British Museum

LONDON
SEELEY AND CO. LIMITED, ESSEX STREET, STRAND
NEW YORK, MACMILLAN AND CO.
1895

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATES

		PAGE
The Sons of God. From the Book of Job	*Frontispiece*	
The Lamb, and Infant Joy. Songs of Innocence	*to face*	20
The Fly, and the Tiger. Songs of Experience	„ „	24
The Book of Thel, title-page. In facsimile by W. Griggs	„ „	33
„ „ page vi. „ „	„ „	36
America, page	„ „	42
„ page	„ „	48

ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

Morning, or Glad Day. From an engraving by W. Blake 11

Illustration from "David Simple." Engraved by W. Blake after T. Stothard, R.A. 17

From a coloured copy of the "Songs of Innocence and Experience." British Museum 22

Frontispiece of Mary Wollstonecraft's "Stories" 24

Page of Young's "Night Thoughts." Illustrated by W. Blake 26

I want! I want!—Help! Help!—Aged Ignorance!—Death's Door 28

Design from the "Book of Urizen." By W. Blake 34

The Ancient of Days setting a Compass to the Earth. From a water-colour drawing by W. Blake. British Museum 39

Sweeping the Parlour in the Interpreter's House 40

Design from "Milton." By W. Blake 47

Portrait of William Blake. From the engraving by L. Schiavonetti, after T. Phillips, R.A 50

PAGE

The Reunion of Soul and Body. From Blair's "Grave," illustrated by W. Blake 53

The Babylonian Woman on the Seven-headed Beast. From a water-colour drawing by W. Blake. British Museum 55

Portrait of Wilson Lowry. By John Linnell. Engraved by Blake and Linnell . 61

The Resurrection of the Dead. From a water-colour drawing by W. Blake. British Museum 63

Woodcut from Thornton's Pastoral 64

The Destruction of Job's Sons and Daughters. From the "Book of Job." By W. Blake 67

With dreams upon my bed thou scarest me. From the "Book of Job." By W. Blake 69

Behemoth and Leviathan. From the "Book of Job." By W. Blake 71

WILLIAM BLAKE

CHAPTER I

Preliminary observations—Blake's Birth—Education—Marriage—Early Poems—Drawings and Engravings.

The position of William Blake among artists is exceptional. Of no other painter of like distinction, save Dante Rossetti, can it be said that his fame as a poet has fully rivalled his fame as a painter; much less that, in the opinion of some, his fame as a seer ought to have exceeded both. Many painters, from Reynolds downwards, have written admirably upon art; in some instances, notably Haydon's, the worth of their precepts greatly exceeds that of their performance. But, Rossetti always excepted, perhaps no other painter of great distinction, save Michael Angelo alone, has achieved high renown in poetry, and the compass of Michael Angelo's poetical work is infinitesimal in comparison with his work as an artist. Again, the literary achievements of an Angelo or a Reynolds admit of clear separation from their performances as artists. The critic who approaches them from the artistic side may, if he pleases, omit the literary side entirely from consideration. This is impossible with Blake, for not only do the artistic and the poetical monuments of his genius nearly balance each other in merit and in their claim upon the attention of posterity, but they are the offspring of the same creative impulse, and are indissolubly fused together by the process adopted for their execution. A study of Blake, therefore, must include more literary discussion than would be allowable in a monograph on any other artist. The poet and painter in Blake, moreover, are but manifestations of the

more comprehensive character of seer, which suggests inquiries alien to both these arts ; while the personal character of the man is so fascinating, and his intellectual character so perplexing, that the investigation of either of them might afford, and often has afforded, material for a prolonged discussion. In the following pages it will be our object, whenever compelled to quit the safe ground of biographical narrative, to subordinate all else to the consideration of Blake as an artist; but the Blake of the brush is too emphatically the Blake of the pen to be long dissociated from him, and neither can be detached from the background of abnormal visionary faculty.

From a certain point of view, artists may be regarded as divisible into three classes : those who regard the material world as an unquestionable solid reality, whose accurate representation is the one mission of Art ; those to whom it is a mere hieroglyphic of an essential existence transcending it ; and those who, uniting the two conceptions, are at the same time idealists and realists. The greatest artists generally belong to the latter class, and with reason, for a literal adherence to matter of fact almost implies defect of imagination ; while an extravagant idealism may be, to say the least, a convenient excuse for defects of technical skill. It is difficult to know whether to class the works of the very greatest artists as realistic or idealistic. Take Albert Dürer's *Melancholia*. It is a hieroglyph, a symbol, an expression of something too intense to be put into words ; a delineation of what the painter beheld with the inner eye alone. Yet every detail is as correct and true to fact as the most uninspired Dutchman could have made it. Take Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne*, and observe how separate details which the artist may have actually noticed, are combined into a whole which has never been beheld, save by the spiritual vision, since the last thyrsus was brandished by the last Mænad. Yet, though the creators of such scenes are the greatest, some realists, such as Velasquez, have in virtue of surpassing technical execution asserted a nearly equal rank. The case is different when we come to the enthusiasts and visionaries, whose art is wholly symbolic, who have given us little that can be enjoyed as art for art's sake, without reference to the ideas of which it is made the vehicle. In many very interesting artists, such as Wiertz and Calvert and Vedder, and in many isolated works of great

masters, such as Giorgione's *Venetian Pastoral*, the feeling is so much in excess of the execution—admirable as this may be—that the result is rather a poem than a picture. But only one artist who has deliberately made himself the prophet of this tendency, who has avowedly and defiantly discarded all purpose from his works save that of spiritual suggestiveness, seems to have ever been admitted as a candidate for very high artistic honours, and he is our countryman, William Blake.

This circumstance alone should render Blake an interesting object of study, even for those who can see no merit in his works : indeed, the less the merit the more remarkable the phenomenon. He is, moreover, a most peculiar and enigmatical character, both intellectually and morally. As an art critic he is of all the most dogmatic, trenchant, and revolutionary. As a poet, were nineteen-twentieths of his compositions to be discarded as rubbish, lyrics would remain not only exquisite in themselves, but possessing the incommunicable and Sapphic quality that a single stanza, even a single phrase, would often suffice to make the writer immortal. The question of his sanity is as well adapted to furnish the world with an interminable subject of discussion as the execution of Charles I. or the assassination of Cæsar. Finally, it is very significant that while no man ever wilfully put more obstacles into the way of his success than Blake, whether as artist, thinker, or poet, and he did in fact succeed in condemning himself to poverty and obscurity, the verdict of his contemporaries is now so far reversed that the drawings which a kind friend overpaid, as he thought, at fifty guineas, are worth a thousand pounds.

What manner of man was he to whose shade the world has made this practical apology ?

William Blake was born on November 28th,[1] 1757, at 28, Broad Street, Golden Square. By a singular coincidence this was the very year which a still more celebrated mystic, Swedenborg, had announced as that of the Last Judgment in a spiritual sense, which was by no means to preclude the world from going on in externals pretty much as usual. Blake's father, James Blake, was a hosier in moderately prosperous circumstances, whose father is stated by Blake's most elaborate commentators, Messrs.

[1] November 20 has been stated as the date, but the above is shown to be correct by the horoscope drawn for November 28, 7.45 P.M. in *Urania, or the Astrologer's Chronicle*, 1825, published therefore in Blake's lifetime, and undoubtedly derived from Varley.

Ellis and Yeats, to have been originally named O'Neil, and to have assumed his wife's name as a means of escape from pecuniary difficulties. This wife, however, was not the mother of James. This genealogy is not supported by any strong authority, and is at variance with another, also indifferently supported, according to which the artist's family were connected with the admiral's. We must leave the question where we find it, merely remarking that Blake's parents were certainly Protestants, and that we can detect no specifically Irish trait in his character or his works. He had three brothers—one, James, mild and unassuming like his father; another, Robert, who died young, apparently with more affinity to William ; the third, John, a scapegrace. There was also a sister who never married, and is described as a thorough gentlewoman, reserved and proud. None of the family except William and Robert seem to have shown any artistic talent. With William it must have been precocious, for, ere he had attained the age of ten, his father, who as a small tradesman might rather have been expected to have thwarted the boy's inclinations, placed him at "Mr. Pars' drawing school in the Strand." Here he learned to draw from plaster casts—the life was denied him—and with the aid of his father and a friendly auctioneer collected prints, then to be picked up cheap, showing from the very first, as he afterwards related, a complete independence of the pseudo-classic taste of the day. At four he had had his first vision, when "God put his forehead to the window, which set him screaming." At eight or ten he saw a tree filled with angels, and angelic figures walking among haymakers. "The child is father to the man."

At the age of fourteen Blake was apprenticed to the engraver Basire. Ryland had been thought of, but Blake, according to a story which he must have narrated, but may not improbably have imagined, demurred, declaring that the fashionable engraver looked as if he would one day be hanged, as he actually was. Basire's practice lay chiefly in engraving antiquities, and the last five years of Blake's apprenticeship were chiefly spent in drawing tombs and architectural details in Westminster Abbey a most advantageous discipline, which imbued his mind with the Gothic spirit, an influence already in the air, evincing itself in Götz von Berlichingens, Rowley Poems, Percy Relics, and Castles of Otranto ; and, by directing him to English history and Shakespeare, powerfully

stimulated and felicitously guided the poetical genius of which he was shortly to give proof. He drew, Malkin tells us, the monuments of kings and queens in every point of view he could catch, frequently standing on them. The heads he considered as portraits, and all the ornaments appeared as miracles of art to his Gothicised imagination. Nor could a better environment for a mystic be desired than the venerable and generally solitary temple, "the height, the space, the gloom, the glory," with its music, its memories, and its constant sense of the presence of the dead. The bent of his mind at the time is shown by his first engraving, *Joseph of Arimathea among the Rocks of Albion*, copied, as he states, from a scarce Italian print. If this was indeed the case, it may be queried whether the title at least was not his—Joseph, according to the legend, having been the first missionary to Britain. The original, if original there was, certainly was not the work of Michael Angelo, to whom Blake chose to attribute it. Scarcely was he out of his articles than he produced (1779) two engravings from the history of England, *The Penance of Jane Shore* and *King Edward and Queen Eleanor*. These were after two water-colour drawings, selected from a much greater number with which he had amused the leisure hours of his apprenticeship. Mr. Gilchrist says that these and other works of the period have little of the peculiar Blakean quality, except the striking design *Morning, or Glad Day*, dated 1780, a facsimile of which is given here. This, indeed, is Blake all over, and would have made an excellent frontispiece for the poems with which he was about to herald the dawn of a new era in English poetry, though in all probability designed as an illustration of the lines in *Romeo and Juliet;*

> Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
> Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.

A naked Apollo-like figure, wearing the dawn for a halo, in whom one fancifully traces a resemblance to Goethe, alights throbbing with joy and victory on the peak of a mountain, while the waning moon, as would seem, sets behind him, and a winged beetle scuds away.

The poems to which reference has been made had meanwhile been slowly accumulating; if the language of the advertisement which heralded their publication is to be taken literally, they were now complete. Before appearing as a poet, however, Blake had to undergo his

probation as a lover. He became enamoured of a pretty girl variously called Polly or Clara Woods. She rejected him. He fell into a melancholy, and was sent to Richmond for change of air. There he lodged with a nursery gardener named Boucher. The daughter of the house, Catherine, had been frequently asked whom she would like to marry, and had always replied that she had not seen the man. Coming on the night of Blake's arrival into the room where he was sitting with the rest of the family, she grew faint from the presentiment that she beheld her destined husband. On subsequently hearing of his disappointment with Clara Woods, she told him that she pitied, and he told her that he loved. They were married on August 18, 1782, Blake having, it is said, proved their mutual constancy by refraining from seeing her for a year, while he was toiling to save enough to render their marriage not utterly imprudent. His first care afterwards was to teach her to read and write, to which he afterwards added enough of the pictorial art to enable her to colour his drawings. A more devoted wife never lived, though her devotion wore in the eyes of strangers an aspect of formality, and was always tinged with awe.

Poetical Sketches, 1783, were the first-fruits of Blake's genius, composed, as asserted in the advertisement prefixed by his friends, between 1768 and 1777.[1] They are the only examples of his literary work devoid of artistic illustration; we ought not, consequently, to spend much time upon them, yet they are the most memorable of his works, for they are nothing short of miraculous, and alone among his productions mark an era. For a hundred and thirty years English poetry had been mainly artificial, the product of conscious effort ranging down from the superb art of *Paradise Lost* to the prettinesses of Pope's imitators, but seldom or never wearing the aspect of a spontaneous growth. This young obscure engraver was the first to show that it was still possible to sing as the bird sings; he and no other was the morning star which announced the new day of English poetry. Had even the verses been of inferior quality, such inspiration would have sufficed for fame, but Blake is as exquisite as original, and warbles such nightingale

[1] If, however, the "Kitty" of "I love the jocund dance" is Catherine Boucher, this poem at least must be later than 1780, unless the name has been substituted for another, as has been known to happen.

Morning, or Glad Day. From an engraving by W. Blake.

notes as England had not heard since Andrew Marvell forsook song for satire. The songs of Dryden, indeed, have great merit, but how they savour of the study compared with the artless melody of a strain like this!

How sweet I roamed from field to field,
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the Prince of Love beheld,
Who in the sunny beams did glide!

He showed me lilies for my hair,
And blushing roses for my brow;
He led me through his gardens fair,
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May dews my wings were wet,
And Phœbus fired my vocal rage;
He caught me in his silken net,
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me;
Then stretches out my golden wing,
And mocks my loss of liberty.

This is such a song as Marlowe might have written, but for a delicate eighteenth-century suggestion in the style, whose aroma is not quite that of the Elizabethan era. It is none the less one of the pieces which none but Blake could have produced. The characteristics of his style, indeed, are much less apparent in this early volume than in his subsequent productions. They are most conspicuous in the *Mad Song*, but a more pleasing if less intense example is the following:

SONG.

Love and harmony combine,
And around our souls entwine,
While thy branches mix with mine
And our roots together join.

Joys upon our branches sit,
Chirping loud and singing sweet;
Like gentle streams beneath our feet
Innocence and virtue meet.

Thou the golden fruit dost bear,
I am clad in flowers fair;
Thy sweet boughs perfume the air,
And the turtle buildeth there.

There she sits and feeds her young,
Sweet I hear her mournful song ;
And thy lovely leaves among,
There is Love : I hear his tongue.

There his charm'd nest he doth lay,
There he sleeps the night away,
There he sports along the day,
And doth among our branches play.

Not the least remarkable of the *Poetical Sketches* are "Samson" and other short pieces in blank verse. They are marvellously Tennysonian; if imitation there was, it obviously was not on Blake's part. Who would have hesitated to ascribe these lines, addressed to the Evening Star, to the Laureate ?

Let thy west wind sleep on
The lake ; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver.

Even more marvellous than the sentiment is the metre, which cannot be judged by a short passage. Well might it be said, "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes," when the secret of melodious blank verse, withheld since the Civil War from all the highly cultured and in many respects highly gifted bards of England, is disclosed on the sudden to this half-educated young man. It is exemplified on a larger scale by the accompanying fragments of an intended tragedy on *Edward the Third*, which proves two things : first, that Blake was destitute of all dramatic faculty ; secondly, that, notwithstanding, few have so thoroughly assimilated Shakespeare. Shakespeare stands almost alone among great poets in having had hardly any direct imitators. Every one, of course, has profited by the study of his art; but those most deeply indebted to him in this respect have felt the least disposed to reproduce his style. The reason is evident. Other writers are partial, Shakespeare is universal ; the model is too vast for study. A deliberate imitation of Shakespeare would assuredly be a failure : imitation is only practicable when it is not deliberate but unconscious, the effluence of a mind so saturated with Shakespeare that it can for the time only express itself in Shakespearian numbers, and think under Shakespearian forms. Blake must have been in such a situation when he attempted *Edward the Third*, the direct fruit

of his roamings among the regal tombs in the Abbey with Shakespeare's historical plays in his hand. The drama is childish, but the feeling approaches Shakespeare as nearly as Keats's early poems approach Spenser. The imitation, being spontaneous and unsought, is never senile, but every line reveals a youth whose soul is with Shakespeare, though his body may be in Golden Square. Yet the reproduction of Shakespeare's manner is never so exact as to conceal the fact that the poet is writing in the eighteenth and not in the sixteenth century. The following passage may serve as an example both of the closeness of Blake's affinity with Shakespeare and of the *nuances* of difference that serve to vindicate his originality.

> Last night beneath
> The moon I walked abroad when all had pitched
> Their tents, and all were still.
> I heard a blooming youth singing a song
> He had composed, and at each pause he wiped
> His dropping eyes. The ditty was "If he
> Returned victorious he should wed a maiden
> Fairer than snow and rich as midsummer."
> Another wept, and wished health to his father.
> I chid them both, but gave them noble hopes.
> These are the minds that glory in the battle,
> And leap and dance to hear the trumpet sound.

This is beautiful description, sentiment and metre, but these beauties sum up the attractions of Blake's dramatic fragment. The dramatic element is wanting, there is no action. This deficiency runs through his whole work, pictorial as well as literary, and explains why one capable of such sublime conceptions was nevertheless incapable of taking rank with the Miltons and Michael Angelos. His productions are full of tremendous scenes, the strivings and agonies of colossal unearthly powers realised by his own mind with a vividness which proves the intensity of his conceptions. Yet he seldom impresses the beholder with any sentiment of awe or terror. The cause is not solely the fantastic character of these conceptions, for the effect is the same when he deals with mankind, and represents it in the most thrilling crises of which humanity is capable. His representation of the plague, for instance, engraved in Gilchrist's biography, excites strong interest and curiosity, but nothing of the shuddering dismay with which we should view such a

scene in actual life, and which is so powerfully conveyed in such works as Géricault's *Wreck of the Medusa* and Poole's *Solomon Eagle*. The reason seems to be that Blake was not only a visionary but also a mystic, and that mysticism is hardly compatible with tragic passion. The visionary, as in the instances of Dante and Bunyan, may realise every detail of his ideal conceptions with the force of actual perception, but it is the very essence of the mystic's creed that things are not what they seem, and the man who knows himself to be depicting a hieroglyphic will never grasp his subject with the force of him who feels that he is dealing with a concrete reality. The Hindoos are a nation of mystics who regard existence as an illusion, and their art labours under the same defects as Blake's; their drama especially, with all the charm of lovely arabesque, makes nothing of the strongest situations, save when these are of the pathetic order. For although the mystic cannot be exciting, he can be tender: and while Blake's efforts at the delineation of frantic passion or overwhelming catastrophes usually (there are exceptions) leave us unmoved, nothing can be more pathetic than some of his delineations, such, for example, as the famous illustration to Blair, of an old man approaching the grave.

It seems almost strange that verses, as contrary to the spirit of the age that gave them birth as prophetic of the ideals of the age to come, should have found friends willing to defray their cost. If, however, it is true that Flaxman was among these friends, Blake had met with one congenial spirit. A clergyman named Matthews, incumbent of Percy Chapel, Charlotte Street, is mentioned as another patron, and as the writer of the well-meaning but too apologetic preface. Through him Blake seems to have become acquainted with Flaxman. To the few then able to appreciate the poems, they might well have seemed indicative of a great poetical career, for they are exactly the sweet, wild, untaught, prelusive music wherewith youth, as yet unschooled by criticism and unawakened to its really profound problems, is wont to essay its art. Why was it that Blake, though rivalling these early attempts in his *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*, never progressed further; and in by far the greater part of his subsequent poetry went off altogether upon a wrong track, so far at least as concerned poetry? Partly, we think, because his mind was almost entirely deficient in the plastic element. He could

reproduce a scene ready depicted for him, as in his illustrations to Job; he could embody a solitary thought with exquisite beauty, whether in poetry or in painting; but he could not combine his ideas into a whole. His faculty was purely lyrical, and when this evanescent endowment forsook him, devoid as he was of all plastic literary power, he had no Oenone or Ulysses to replace his Claribels and Eleanores. His verse became a mere accompaniment of his pictorial art, and harmonising with its vagueness and obscurity, necessarily lacked the symmetry with which a colourist can dispense, but which is essential to a poet. Even more remarkable than the music of Blake's early verses, unparalleled in their age, is the fact, vouched for by J. T. Smith, the biographer of Nollekens and Keeper of Prints at the British Museum, that he had composed tunes for them, which he could only repeat by ear from his ignorance of musical notation. Some of these, Smith says, were exquisitely beautiful.

At the appearance of the *Poetical Sketches* (1783), Blake had for a year been a married man, and was actively striving to make a living as an engraver. Most of his work of this nature at this time was executed after Stothard. It cannot be disputed that this graceful artist largely influenced Blake's style in its more idyllic aspects; whether, as he was afterwards inclined to assert, Stothard's invention owed something to him is not easy to determine. In 1784 he lost his father, a mild, pious man, who had well performed his duty to his son. Blake's elder brother James took his business, and the artist, who had probably inherited some little property, returned from Green Street to Broad Street, and, establishing himself next door to his brother, launched into speculation as a print-seller in partnership with a former fellow apprentice named Parker, taking his brother Robert as a gratuitous pupil. In 1785 he sent four drawings to the Academy. Three, illustrative of the story of Joseph, were shown in the International Exhibition of 1862, and are described by Gilchrist as "full of soft tranquil beauty, specimens of Blake's earlier style; a very different one from that of his later and better-known works." This is probably as much as to say that he then wrought much under the influence of Stothard, after whom he engraved the subject from *David Simple* given here; for the earlier design illustrative of the passage in *Romeo and Juliet* is characteristically Blakean. Mr. Gilchrist adds, "the design is correct and blameless, not to say tame (for Blake), the colour full,

harmonious and sober." Mr. Rossetti says that the figure of Joseph, in the third drawing, "is especially pure and impulsive."

In 1787 Blake's experiment in print-selling came to an end, through disagreements, it is said, with his partner ; but as neither appears to have

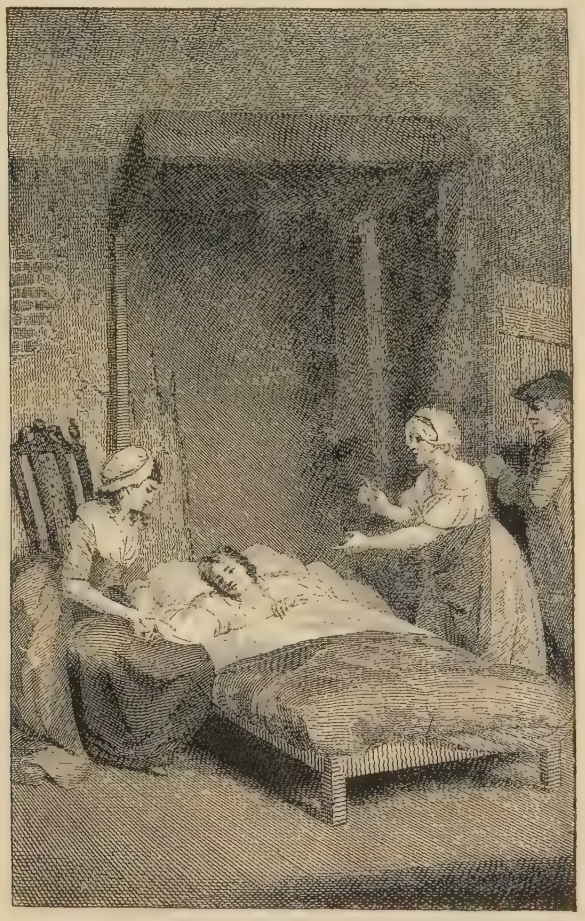


Illustration from "David Simple." Engraved by W. Blake after T. Stothard, R.A.

afterwards pursued the calling, it is probable that it had never been profitable. Parker obtained some distinction as an engraver, chiefly after Stothard, and died in 1805. In February, 1787, Blake had sustained a severe loss in the death of his brother and pupil Robert. Blake himself nursed the patient for some weeks, and when at last the end

came, it is not surprising that he should have beheld his brother's spirit "arise and clap its hands for joy." Not long after, as he asserted, the spirit appeared to him in a dream, and revealed to him that process of printing from copper plates which, as we shall see, had the most decisive influence upon his work as an artist. Writing to Hayley in 1800, he says, "Thirteen years ago I lost a brother, and with his spirit I converse daily and hourly in the spirit, and see him in remembrance in the regions of my imagination. I hear his advice, and even now write from his dictate." "The ruins of Time," he finely subjoins, "build mansions in Eternity."

From this time Blake's sole assistant was his wife, whom he carefully instructed, and who tinted many of the coloured drawings which henceforth form the more characteristic portion of his work. After giving up his business as a print-seller, he removed from Broad Street to 28, Poland Street. Messrs. Ellis and Yeats conjecture that this may have been to escape the blighting influence of his commercial brother next door, but it is more probable that his venture had impoverished him, and that he was obliged to give up housekeeping.

CHAPTER II

Blake's Technical Methods—"Songs of Innocence" and "Songs of Experience"—Life in Poland Street and in Lambeth—Mystical Poetry and Art.

It was during his residence in Poland Street that Blake first appeared in that mingled character of poet and painter which marks him off so conspicuously from other painters and other poets. Painting has often been made the handmaid of poetry; it was Blake's idea, without infringing upon this relationship, to make poetry no less the handmaid of painting by employing his verse, engraved and beautified with colour, to enhance the artistic value of his designs, as well as to provide them with the needful basis of subject. The same principle may probably be recognised in those Oriental scrolls where the graceful labour of the scribe is as distinctly a work of art as the illustration of the miniaturist; but of these Blake can have known nothing. Necessity was with him the mother of invention. Since the appearance of *Poetical Sketches* he had written much that he desired to publish —but how to pay for printing? So severely had he suffered by his unfortunate commercial adventure that when at length, as he firmly believed, the new process by which his song and his design could be facsimiled together was revealed by his brother's spirit in a dream, a half-crown was the only coin his wife and he possessed between them in the world. One shilling and tenpence of this was laid out in providing the necessary materials.

The technical method to which Blake now resorted is thus described by Mr. Gilchrist: "It was quite an original one. It consisted of a species of engraving in relief, both words and designs. The verse was written and the designs and marginal embellishments outlined on the copper with an impervious liquid, probably the ordinary stopping-out varnish of engravers. Then all the white parts or lights, the remainder of the

plate that is, were eaten away with aquafortis or other acid, so that the outline of letter and design was left prominent, as in stereotype. From these plates he printed off in any tint, yellow, brown, blue, required to be the prevailing or ground colour in his facsimiles; red he used for the letterpress. The page was then coloured up by hand in imitation of the original drawing with more or less variety of detail in the local hues. He ground and mixed his water-colours himself on a piece of statuary marble, after a method of his own, with common carpenter's glue diluted. The colours he used were few and simple: indigo, cobalt, gamboge, vermilion, Frankfort-black freely, ultramarine rarely, chrome not at all. These he applied with a camel's-hair brush, not with a sable, which he disliked. He taught Mrs. Blake to take off the impressions with care and delicacy, which such plates signally needed; and also to help in tinting them from his drawings with right artistic feeling; in all of which tasks she, to her honour, much delighted. The size of the plates was small, for the sake of economising copper, something under five inches by three. The number of engraved pages in the *Songs of Innocence* alone was twenty-seven. They were done up in boards by Mrs. Blake's hand, forming a small octavo; so that the poet and his wife did everything in making the book, writing, designing, printing, engraving,—everything except manufacturing the paper; the very ink, or colour rather, they did make. Never before, surely, was a man so literally the author of his own book."

The total effect of this process is tersely expressed by Mr. Rossetti, "The art is made to permeate the poetry." It resulted in the publication of *Songs of Innocence* in 1789, two years after its discovery or revelation. Other productions, of that weird and symbolic character in which Blake came more and more to delight, followed in quick succession. These will claim copious notice, but for the present we may pass on to *Songs of Experience*, produced in 1794, so much of a companion volume to *Songs of Innocence* that the two are usually found within the same cover. Neither attracted much attention at the time. Charles Lamb says: "I have heard of his poems, but have never seen them." He is, however, acquainted with "Tiger, tiger," which he pronounces "glorious." The price of the two sets when issued together was from thirty shillings to two guineas—an illustration of the material service which Art can render

The Lamb

plate that is, were eaten away with aquafortis or other acid, so that the outline of letter and design was left prominent, as in stereotype. From these plates he printed off in any tint, yellow, brown, blue, required to be the prevailing or ground colour in his facsimiles; red he used for the letterpress. The page was then coloured up by hand in imitation of the original drawing with more or less variety of detail in the local hues. He ground and mixed his water-colours himself on a piece of statuary marble, after a method of his own, with common carpenter's glue diluted. The colours he used were few and simple: indigo, cobalt, gamboge, vermilion, Frankfort-black freely, ultramarine rarely, chrome not at all. These he applied with a camel's-hair brush, not with a sable, which he disliked. He taught Mrs. Blake to take off the impressions with care and delicacy, which such plates signally needed; and also to help in tinting them from his drawings with right artistic feeling; in all of which tasks she, to her honour, much delighted. The size of the plates was small, for the sake of economising copper, something under five inches by three. The number of engraved pages in the *Songs of Innocence* alone was twenty-seven. They were done up in boards by Mrs. Blake's hand, forming a small octavo; so that the poet and his wife did everything in making the book, writing, designing, printing, engraving,—everything except manufacturing the paper; the very ink, or colour rather, they did make. Never before, surely, was a man so literally the author of his own book."

The artistic effect of this process is tersely expressed by Mr. Rossetti, "The—is made to permeate the poetry." It resulted in the publication of *Songs of Innocence* in 1789, two years after its discovery or revelation. Other productions, of that weird and symbolic character in which Blake came more and more to delight, followed in quick succession. These will claim copious notice, but for the present we may pass on to *Songs of Experience*, produced in 1794, so much of a companion volume to *Songs of Innocence* that the two are usually found within the same cover. Neither attracted much attention at the time. Charles Lamb says: "I have heard of his poems, but have never seen them." He is, however, acquainted with "Tiger, tiger," which he pronounces "glorious." The price of the two sets when issued together was from thirty shillings to two guineas—an illustration of the material service which Art can render

The Lamb
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.
By the stream & o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing woolly bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice:
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb I'll tell thee:
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek & he is mild;
He became a little child:
I a child & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb God bless thee.
Little Lamb God bless thee.

From Blake's "Songs of Innocence,"

Infant Joy
I have no name
I am but two days old.
What shall I call thee?
I happy am
Joy is my name.—
Sweet joy befall thee!
Pretty joy!
Sweet joy but two days old.
Sweet joy I call thee;
Thou dost smile.
I sing the while
Sweet joy befall thee.

From Blake's "Songs of Innocence,"

to Poetry when it is considered that, published simply as poems, they would in that age have found no purchasers at eighteenpence. This price was nevertheless absurdly below their real value, and was enhanced even during the artist's lifetime. It came to be five guineas, and late in his life friends, from the munificent Sir Thomas Lawrence downwards, would commission sets tinted by himself at from ten to twenty guineas as a veiled charity.

Of the poems and illustrations in *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience* Gilchrist justly declares that their warp and woof are formed in one texture, and that to treat of them separately is like pulling up a daisy by the roots out of the green sward in which it springs. One essential characteristic inspires them both, and may be defined as childish fearlessness, the innocent courage of the infant who puts his hand upon the serpent and the cockatrice. Any one but Blake would have feared to publish designs and verses apparently so verging upon the trivial, and which indeed would have been trivial—and worse, affected—if the emanation of almost any other brain, or the execution of almost any other hand. Being his, their sincerity is beyond question, and they are a valuable psychological document as establishing the possibility of a man of genius and passion reaching thirty with the simplicity of a child. Hardly anything else in literature or art, unless some thought in Shakespeare, so powerfully conveys the impression of a pure elemental force, something absolutely spontaneous, innocent of all contact with and all influence from the refinements of culture. They certainly are not as a rule powerful, and contrast forcibly with the lurid and gigantic conceptions which if we did not remember that the same Dante depicted *The Tower of Famine* and *Matilda gathering Flowers*, we could scarcely believe to have proceeded from the same mind. Their impressiveness proceeds from a different source ; their primitive innocence and simplicity, and the rebuke which they seem to administer to artifice and refinement. Even great artists and inspired poets, suddenly confronted with such pure unassuming nature, may be supposed to feel as the disciples must have felt when the Master set the little child among them. No more characteristic examples could have been given than "The Lamb" and "Infant Joy" from *Songs of Innocence*, and "The Fly" and "The Tiger" from *Songs of Experience* selected for reproduction here from an

uncoloured copy in the library of the British Museum. There is frequently a great difference in the colouring of the copies. That in the Museum Print Room is in full rich colour, while others are very lightly and delicately tinted.

It is of course much easier to convey an idea of the merits of Blake's

NURSE'S Song
When the voices of children are heard on the green
And whisperings are in the dale: Weep
The days of my
My face turns green and pale.
Then come home my
the sun is gone down
And
play
and nights in disguise.

From a coloured copy of the "Songs of Innocence and Experience." British Museum.

verse than of his painting, for the former loses nothing by transcription, and the latter everything. The merit of the latter, too, is a variable quantity, depending much upon the execution of the coloured plates. The uncoloured are but phantoms of Blake's ideas. The general characteristics of his art in these books may be described as caressing

tenderness and gentle grace, evinced in elegant human figures, frequently drooping like willows or recumbent like river deities, and in sinuous stems and delicate sprays, often as profuse as delicate. The foliated ornament in "On Another's Sorrow," for instance, seems like a living thing, and would almost speak without the aid of the accompanying verse. The figures usually are too small to impress by themselves, and rather seem subsidiary parts of the general design than the dominant factors. They mingle with the inanimate nature portrayed, as one note of a multitudinous concert blends with another. Yet "The Little Girl Found" tells its story by itself powerfully enough; and the innocent Bacchanalianism of the chorus in the "Laughing Song" is conveyed with truly Lyæan spirit and energy.

The prevalent cheerfulness of the *Songs of Innocence* is of course modified in *Songs of Experience*. The keynote of the former is admirably struck in the introductory poem :—

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me.

"Pipe a song about a Lamb!"
So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again."
So I piped; he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!"
So I sang the same again.
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read."
So he vanished from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed.

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

This incarnate enigma among men could manifestly be as transparent as crystal when he knew exactly what he wished to say—a remark which may not be useless to the student of his mystical and prophetical writings. The character of *Songs of Experience*, published in 1794, when

Frontispiece of Mary Wollstonecraft's "Stories."

he had attained the age so often fatal to men of genius, is conveyed more symbolically, yet intelligibly, in "The Angel":—

I dreamt a dream! What can it mean?
And that I was a maiden Queen
Guarded by an Angel mild:
Witless woe was ne'er beguiled!

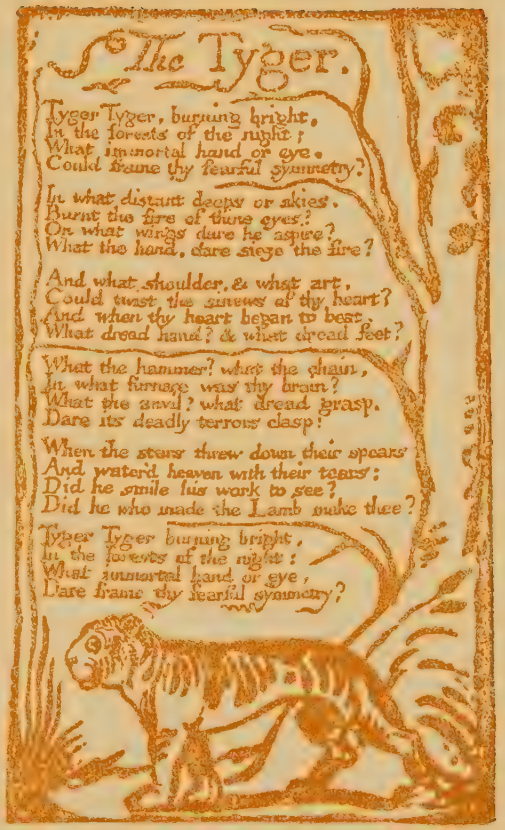
incarnate enigma among men could manifestly be as transparent as crystal, when he knew exactly what he wished to say—a remark which may not be useless to the student of his mystical and prophetical [illegible]. The character of *Songs of Experience*, published in 1794, when

Frontispiece of Mary Wollstonecraft's "Stories."

he had attained the age so often fatal to men of genius, is conveyed more symbolically, yet intelligibly, in "The Angel":—

I dreamt a dream! What can it mean?
And that I was a maiden Queen
Guarded by an Angel mild:
Witless woe was ne'er beguiled!

From Blake's "Songs of Experience."


The Tyger.
Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?
In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?
And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?
What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!
When the stars threw down their spears
And watered heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?
Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

From Blake's "Songs of Experience."

And I wept both night and day,
And he wiped my tears away ;
And I wept both day and night,
And hid from him my heart's delight.

So he took his wings and fled ;
Then the man blushed very red.
I dried my tears and armed my fears
With ten thousand shields and spears.

Soon my Angel came again ;
I was armed, he came in vain ;
For the time of youth was fled,
And gray hairs were on my head.

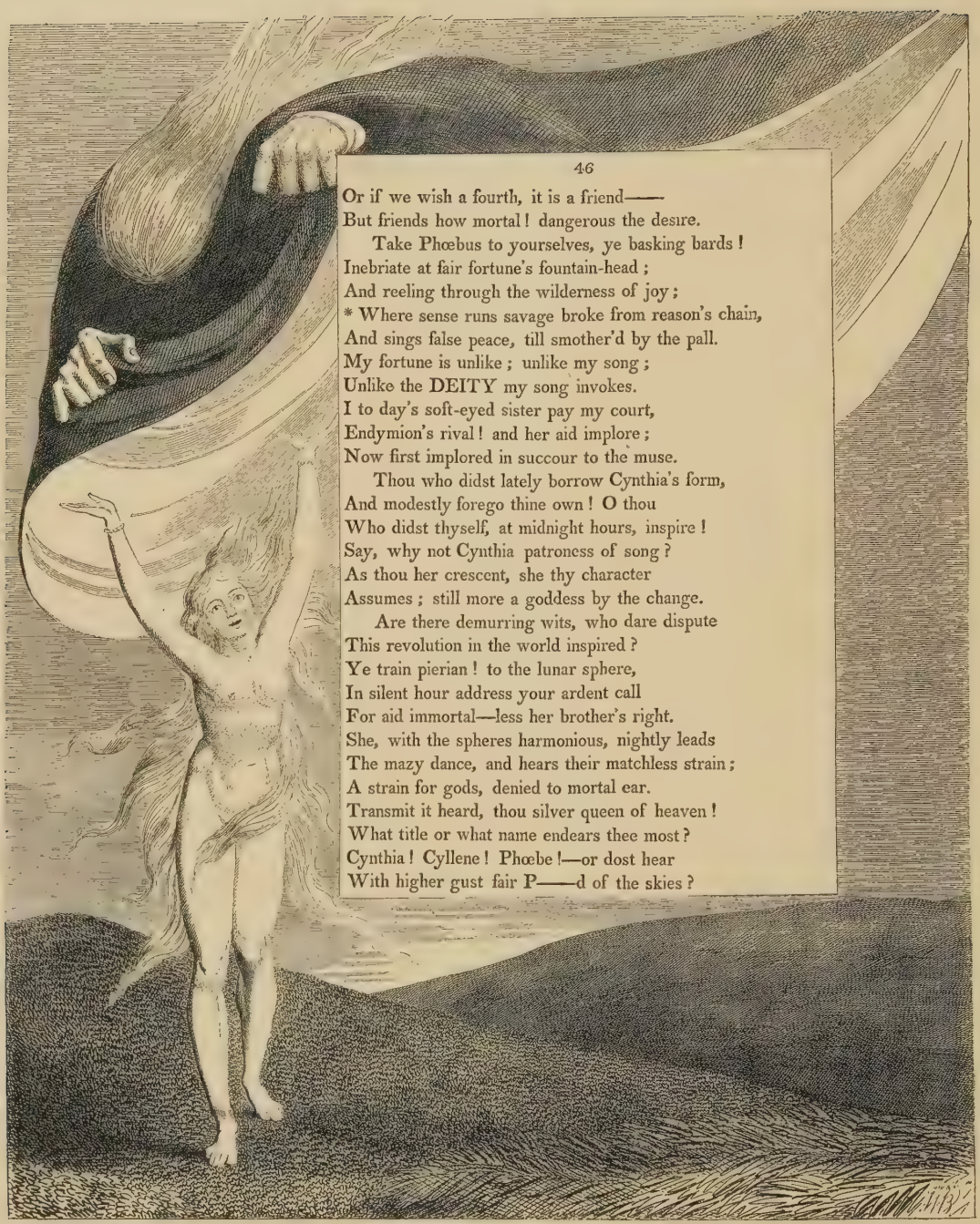
Generally speaking, the *Songs of Experience* may be said to answer to their title. They exhibit an awakening of thought and an occupation with metaphysical problems alien to the *Songs of Innocence*. Such a stanza as this shows that Blake's mind had been busy :—

Nought loves another as itself
  Nor venerates another so ;
Nor is it possible to thought
  A greater than itself to know.

These ideas, however, are always conveyed, as in the remainder of the poem quoted, through the medium of a concrete fact represented by the poet. Perhaps the finest example of this fusion of imagination and thought is this stanza of the most striking and best known of all the poems, " The Tiger " :—

When the stars threw down their spears
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see ?
Did He who made the lamb make thee ?

An evident, though probably unconscious, reminiscence of " When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," and like it for that extreme closeness to the inmost essence of things which the author of the Book of Job enjoyed in virtue of the primitive simplicity of his age and environment, and Blake through a childlike temperament little short of preternatural in an age like ours. It may be added, that although the pieces in *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs*

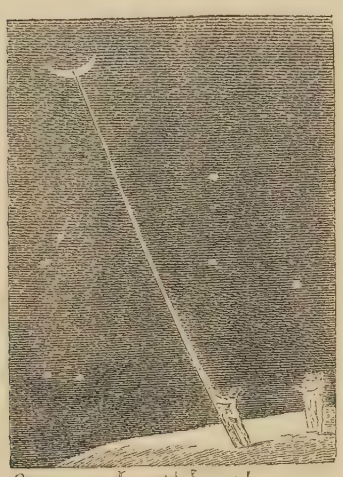

46
Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend——
But friends how mortal! dangerous the desire.
Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking bards!
Inebriate at fair fortune's fountain-head;
And reeling through the wilderness of joy;
* Where sense runs savage broke from reason's chain,
And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.
My fortune is unlike; unlike my song;
Unlike the DEITY my song invokes.
I to day's soft-eyed sister pay my court,
Endymion's rival! and her aid implore;
Now first implored in succour to the muse.
Thou who didst lately borrow Cynthia's form,
And modestly forego thine own! O thou
Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire!
Say, why not Cynthia patroness of song?
As thou her crescent, she thy character
Assumes; still more a goddess by the change.
Are there demurring wits, who dare dispute
This revolution in the world inspired?
Ye train pierian! to the lunar sphere,
In silent hour address your ardent call
For aid immortal—less her brother's right.
She, with the spheres harmonious, nightly leads
The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain;
A strain for gods, denied to mortal ear.
Transmit it heard, thou silver queen of heaven!
What title or what name endears thee most?
Cynthia! Cyllene! Phœbe!—or dost hear
With higher gust fair P——d of the skies?

Page of Young's "Night Thoughts." Illustrated by W. Blake.

of Experience are of very unequal degrees of poetical merit, none want the infallible mark of inspired poetry—spontaneous, inimitable melody.

Both the simplicity and the melody, however, are absent from the remarkable works with which Blake had been occupying himself during the interval between the publication of the two series of his songs, which, with their successors, have given him a peculiar and unique reputation in their own weird way, but could not by themselves have given him the reputation of a poet. Blake's plain prose, as we shall see, is much more effective. In a strictly artistic point of view, nevertheless, these compositions reveal higher capacities than would have been inferred from the idyllic beauty of the pictorial accompaniments of *Songs of Innocence and Experience.* Before discussing these it will be convenient to relate the chief circumstances of Blake's life during the period of their production, and up to the remarkable episode of his migration to Felpham. They were not memorable or striking, but one of them had considerable influence upon his development. In 1791 he was employed by Johnson, the Liberal publisher of St. Paul's Churchyard, and as such a minor light of his time, to illustrate Mary Wollstonecraft's *Tales for Children* with six plates, both designed and engraved by him, one of which accompanies this essay. They are much in the manner of Stothard. This commission brought Blake as a guest to Johnson's house, where he became acquainted with a republican coterie—Mary Wollstonecraft, Godwin, Paine, Holcroft, Fuseli—with whose political opinions he harmonised well, though totally dissimilar in temperament from all of them, except Fuseli, who gave him several tokens of interest and friendship. These acquaintanceships, and the excitement of the times, led Blake to indite, and, which is more extraordinary, Johnson to publish, the first of an intended series of seven poetical books on the French Revolution. This, Gilchrist tells us, was a thin quarto, without illustrations, published without Blake's name, and priced at a shilling. Gilchrist probably derived this information from a catalogue, for he carefully avoids claiming to have seen the book, which seems to have also escaped the researches of all Blake's other biographers. It must be feared that it is entirely lost. Gilchrist must, however, have known something more of it if his assertion that the other six books

were actually written but not printed, "events taking a different turn from the anticipated one," is based upon anything besides conjecture.



9

10

In 1793 Blake removed from Poland Street to Hercules Buildings, Lambeth, then a row of suburban cottages with little gardens. Here he

11

15

engraved his friend Flaxman's designs for the *Odyssey*, to replace plates engraved by Piroli and lost in the voyage from Italy, whence Flaxman

had returned after seven years' absence. In 1795 he designed three illustrations for Stanley's translation of Burger's "Lenore," and in 1796 executed a much more important work, 537 drawings for an edition of Young's *Night Thoughts* projected by a publisher named Edwards. Forty-three were engraved and published in 1797, but the undertaking was carried no further for want of encouragement, and the designs, after remaining long in the publisher's family, eventually came into the hands of Mr. Bain of the Haymarket, who is still the possessor. The most important are described by Mr. Frederic Shields in the appendix to the second volume of Gilchrist's biography. Mr. Shields' descriptions are so fascinating[1] that from them alone one would be inclined to rate the drawings very high: but Mr. Gilchrist thinks these ill adapted for the special purpose of book illustration which they were destined to subserve, and reminds us that the absence of colour is a grave loss. Blake is said to have been paid only a guinea a plate for the forty-three engravings, on which he worked for a year. The Lambeth period, however, seems not to have been an unprosperous one, for he had many pupils. Several curious anecdotes of it were related after his death on the alleged authority of Mrs. Blake, but their truth seems doubtful. It is certain that during this period he met with the most constant of his patrons, Mr. Thomas Butts, who for nearly thirty years continued a steady buyer of his drawings, and but for whom he would probably have fallen into absolute distress.

It is now time to speak of the literary works—"pictured poesy," like the woven poesy of *The Witch of Atlas*—produced during this period. In 1789, the year of publication of the *Songs of Innocence*, the series opens with *Thel*. In 1790 comes *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*; in 1793, *The Gates of Paradise*, *The Vision of the Daughters of Albion*, and *America*; in 1794, *Europe*, *A Prophecy*, and *Urizen*; in 1795, *The Song of Los*, and *The Book of Ahaniah*. In 1797 Blake seems to have written, or to have begun to write, the mystical poem ultimately entitled *Vala*, never published by him, and more than fifty years after his death found

[1] As for example "Man lies by a rock-bound shore, his thoughts flying forth from him in likeness of delicate airy figures driven by the wind to perish in the endless sea as soon as born." In the absence of the drawings themselves such descriptions affect us like the projects for unwritten stories in Hawthorne's *American Note Book*.

in Linnell's possession in such a state of confusion that it took Messrs. Ellis and Yeats days to arrange the MS., which they fondly deem to be now in proper order. It is printed in the third volume of their work on Blake. *Tiriel* is undated, but would seem to be nearly contemporary with *Thel.*

The Gates of Paradise constitutes an exception to the general spirit of the works of this period, the accompanying text, though mystical enough, being lyrical and not epical. The seventeen beautiful designs, emblematical of the incidents necessarily associated with human nature, are well described by Allan Cunningham as "a sort of devout dream, equally wild and lovely."

The merits of this remarkable series of works will always be a matter of controversy. "Whether," as Blake himself says, "whether this is Jerusalem or Babylon, we know not." It must be so, for they are purely subjective, there is no objective criterion ; they admit of comparison with nothing, and can be tested by no recognised rules. In the whole compass of human creation there is perhaps hardly anything so distinctively an emanation of the mind that gave it birth. Visions they undoubtedly are, and, as Messrs. Ellis and Yeats well say, they are manifestly not the production of a pretender to visionary powers. Whatever Blake has here put down, pictorially or poetically, is evidently a record of something actually discerned by the inner eye. This, however, leaves the question of their value still open. To the pictorial part, indeed, almost all are agreed in attaching a certain value, though the warmth of appreciation is widely graduated. But literary estimation is not only discrepant but hostile ; some deem them revelation, others rhapsody. The one thing certain is the general tendency towards Pantheism which Mr. Swinburne has made the theme of an elaborate essay. To us they seem an exemplification of the truth that no man can serve two masters. Blake had great gifts, both as poet and artist, and he aspired not only to employ both, but to combine both in the same work. At first this was practicable, but soon the artistic faculty grew while the poetical dwindled. Not only did the visible speech of painting become more important to him than the viewless accents of verse, but his poetry became infected with the artistic method. He allowed a latitude to his language which he ought to have reserved for his form and colour, and became as hieroglyphic

in a speech where hieroglyphs are illegitimate as in one where they are permissible. This is proved by the fact that the decline in the purity of poetical form and in the perspicuity of poetical language proceed *pari passu*. *Thel*, the earliest, is also both the most luminous and the most musical of these pieces. Could Blake have schooled himself to have written such blank verse as he had already produced in *Edward the Third* and *Samson*, *Thel* would have been a very fine poem. Even as it is its lax, rambling semi-prose is full of delicate modulations :

> The daughters of the Seraphim led round their sunny flocks,
> All but the youngest ; she in paleness sought the secret air
> To fade away like morning beauty from her mortal day.
> Down by the river of Adera her soft voice is heard,
> And thus her gentle lamentation falls like morning dew.

In every succeeding production, however, there is less of metrical beauty, and thought and expression grow continually more and more amorphous. Blake may not improbably have been influenced by Ossian, whose supposed poems were popular in his day, and from whom some of his proper names, such as Usthona, seem to have been adopted. Many then deemed that Ossian had demonstrated form to be a mere accident of poetry instead of, as in truth it is, an indissoluble portion of its essence. There is certainly a strong family resemblance between Blake's shadowy conceptions and Ossian's misty sublimities. On the other hand, he may be credited with having made a distinguished disciple in Walt Whitman, who would not, we think, have written as he did if Blake had never existed. What was pardonable in one so utterly devoid of the sentiment of beautiful form as Whitman, was less so in one so exquisitely gifted as Blake. Both derive some advantages from their laxity, especially the poet of Democracy, but both suffer from the inability of poetry, divorced from metrical form, to take a serious hold upon the memory. One reads and admires, and by and by the sensation is of the passage of a great procession of horsemen and footmen and banners, but no distinct impression of a single countenance.

The general effect of these strange works upon the average mind is correctly expressed by Gilchrist, when he says, speaking of *Europe :* " It is hard to trace out any distinct subject, any plan or purpose, or to determine whether it mainly relates to the past, the present, or things to come.

And yet its incoherence has a grandeur about it as of the utterance of a man whose eyes are fixed on strange and awful sights, invisible to by-standers." What, then, did Blake suppose himself to behold? Messrs. Ellis and Yeats have devoted an entire volume of their three-volume work on Blake to the exposition of his visions. Their comment is often highly suggestive, but it is seldom convincing. When the right interpretation of a symbol has been found, it is usually self-evident. Not so with their explanations, which appear neither demonstrably wrong nor demonstrably right. Not that Blake talked aimless nonsense; we are conscious of a general drift of thought in some particular direction which seems to us to offer a general affinity to the thought of the ancient Gnostics. It would be interesting if some competent person would endeavour to determine whether the resemblance goes any deeper than externals. Blake certainly knew nothing of the Gnostics at first hand, nor is it probable that he could have gained any knowledge of them from the mystical writers he did study, Behmen and Swedenborg. But similar tendencies will frequently incarnate themselves in individuals at widely remote periods of the world's history without evidence of direct filiation. Even so exceptional a personage as Blake cannot be considered apart from his age, and his age, among its other aspects, was one of mesmerism and illuminism. The superficial resemblance of his writings to those of the Gnostics is certainly remarkable. Both embody their imaginations in concrete forms; both construct elaborate cosmogonies and obscure myths; both create hierarchies of principalities and powers, and equip their spiritual potentates with sonorous appellations; both disparage matter and its Demiurgus. "I fear," said Blake to Robinson, "that Wordsworth loves nature, and nature is the work of the devil. The devil is in us as far as we are nature." The chief visible difference, that the Gnostics' philosophy tends to asceticism, and Blake's to enjoyment, may perhaps be explained by the consideration that he was a poet, and that they were philosophers and divines. Perhaps the best preparation for any student of Blake who might wish to investigate this subject further would be to read the article in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography* upon the *Pistis Sophia*, the only Gnostic book that has come down to us, and one which Blake would have delighted in illustrating. The Gnostic belief in the all-importance of the

transcendent knowledge which comes of immediate perception (γνῶσις) reappears in him with singular intensity. "Men are admitted into heaven," he says, "not because they have curbed and governed their passions, or have no passions, but because they have cultivated their understandings. The fool shall not enter into heaven, let him be ever so holy." Nothing in Blake, perhaps, is so Gnostic as the strange poem, *The Everlasting Gospel*, first published by Mr. Rossetti, though many things in it would have shocked the Gnostics.

The strictly literary criticism of Blake's mystical books may be almost confined to the *Book of Thel*, for this alone possesses sufficient symmetry to allow a judgment to be formed upon it as a whole. The others are like quagmires occasionally gay with brilliant flowers; but *Thel*, though its purpose may be obscure, is at all events coherent, with a beginning and an end. Thel, "youngest daughter of the Seraphim," roves through the lower world lamenting the mortality of beautiful things, including her own. All things with which she discourses offer her consolation, but to no purpose. At last she enters the realm of Death himself.

> The eternal gates' terrific porter lifted the northern bar;
> Thel entered in and saw the secrets of the land unknown.
> She saw the couches of the dead, and where the fibrous root
> Of every heart on earth infixes deep its restless twists:
> A land of sorrows and of tears, where never a smile was seen.
>
> She wandered in the land of clouds, through valleys dark listening
> Dolours and lamentations; waiting oft beside a dewy grave
> She stood in silence, listening to the voices of the ground,
> Till to her own grave-plot she came, and there she sat down,
> And heard this voice of sorrow breathed from the hollow pit.

The effect of the voice of sorrow upon Thel is answerable to that of the spider upon little Miss Muffet. This abrupt conclusion injures the effect of a piece which otherwise may be compared to a strain of soothing music, suggestive of many things, but giving definite expression to none. Messrs. Ellis and Yeats, however, have no difficulty in assigning a meaning. Thel, according to them, is "the pure spiritual essence," her grief is the dread of incarnation, and her ultimate flight is a return "to the land of pure unembodied innocence from whence she came." Yet her forsaking this land is represented as her own act, and it is difficult to see

how she could have "led round her sunny flocks" in it if she had not been embodied while she inhabited it. At the same time, if Messrs. Ellis and Yeats are right, no interpretation of Blake can be disproved by any inconsistency that it may seem to involve. "The surface," they say, "is perpetually, as it were, giving way before one, and revealing another surface below it, and that again dissolves when we try to

Design from the "Book of Urizen." By W. Blake.

study it. The making of religions melts into the making of the earth, and that fades away into some allegory of the rising and the setting of the sun. It is all like a great cloud full of stars and shapes, through which the eye seeks a boundary in vain."

Mr. Yeats, putting his interpretation of Blake's symbolism more tersely into the preface to his excellent edition of the Poetical Works, describes it as shadowing forth the endless conflict between the Imagina-

tion and the Reason, which, we may add, the Gnostics would have expressed as the strife between the Supreme Deity and the god of this world, the very phrase which Mr. Yeats himself uses in describing Urizen, Blake's Evil Genius, "the maker of dead law and blind negation," contrasted as the Gnostics would have contrasted him with Los, the deity of the living world. Blake, therefore, has points of contact with the representatives of the French Revolution on one side, and with Coleridge on the other. Mr. Yeats's interpretation is in itself coherent and plausible, but the question whether it can be fairly deduced from Blake himself is one on which few are entitled to pronounce, and the causes of Blake's obscurity are not so visible as its consequences. To us, as already said, much of it appears to arise from his imperfect discrimination between the provinces of speech and of painting. His discourse frequently seems a hieroglyphic which would have been more intelligible if it could have been expressed in the manner proper to hieroglyphics by pictorial representation. As Mr. Smetham says of some of the designs, "Thought cannot fathom the secret of their power, and yet the power is there." It seems evident that the poem, when a complete lyric, generally preceded the picture in Blake's mind, and that the latter must usually be taken as a gloss, in which he seeks to illustrate by means of visible representation what he was conscious of having left obscure by verbal expression. The exquisite song of the Sunflower, for example, certainly existed before the very slight accompanying illustration.

> Ah Sunflower, weary of time,
> Who counted the steps of the sun,
> Seeking after that sweet golden clime
> Where the traveller's journey is done.
>
> Where the youth, pined away with desire,
> And the pale virgin shrouded in snow,
> Arise from their graves and aspire
> Where my sunflower wishes to go.

The first of these stanzas is perfectly clear : the second requires no interpretation to a poetical mind, but will not bear construing strictly, and its comprehension is certainly assisted by the slight fugitive design lightly traced around the border. Generally the pictorial illustration of Blake's thought is much more elaborate, but in *Songs of Innocence and*

Experience it almost always seems to have grown out of the poem. In the less inspired *Prophetical Books*, on the other hand, the pictorial representation, even when present only to the artist's mind, seems to have frequently suggested or modified the text. An example may be adduced from *The Book of Thel.*

> Why an ear, a whirlpool fierce to draw creations in ?

Blake had noted the external likeness of the convolutions of the ear to the convolutions of a whirlpool ; therefore the ear shall be described as actually being what it superficially resembles, and because the whirlpool sucks in ships, the ear shall suck in creations. It must also be remembered that Blake's belief that his works were given him by inspiration prevented his revising them, and that they were stereotyped by the method of their publication. No considerable productions of the human mind, it is probable, so nearly approach the character of absolutely extemporaneous utterances.

Before passing from the literary to the artistic expression of Blake's genius in these books, something must be said of the remarkable appendix to *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* entitled *Proverbs of Hell.* These are a number of aphoristic sayings, impregnated with Blake's peculiarities of thought and expression, but for the most part so shrewd and pithy as to demonstrate the author's sanity, at least at this time of his life. The following are some of the more striking :—

> Drive your cart and your plough over the bones of the dead.
> The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom.
> A fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees.
> All wholesome food is caught without a net or a trap.
> If the fool would persist in his folly he would become wise.
> The fox condemns the trap, not himself.
> The eagle never lost so much time as when he submitted to learn of the crow
> The fox provides for himself, but God provides for the lion.
> He who has suffered you to impose on him, knows you.
> The tigers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction.
> One law for the lion and ox is oppression.
> The best wine is the oldest, the best water the newest.

These are not the scintillations of reason which may occasionally illumine the chaos of a madman's brain, but bespeak a core of good

sense quite inconsistent with general mental disturbance, though sufficiently compatible with delusion on particular subjects. With incomparable art, Shakespeare has imparted a touch of wildness to Hamlet's shrewdest sayings ; but Blake speaks rather as Polonius would have spoken if it had been possible for Polonius to speak in tropes.

From the difficult subject of the interpretation of Blake's mystical designs we pass with satisfaction to the artistic qualities of the designs themselves. On this point there is an approximation to unanimity. To some the sublime, to others the grotesque, may seem to preponderate, but all will allow them to be among the most remarkable and original series of conceptions that ever emanated from a mortal brain. To whatever exceptions they may be liable, it enlarges one's apprehension of the compass of human faculties to know that human faculties have been adequate to their production. They may be ranked with the most imaginative passages of *Paradise Lost*, and of Byron's *Cain* as an endeavour of the mind to project itself beyond the visible and tangible, and to create for itself new worlds of grandeur and of gloom in height and abyss and interstellar space. Wonderful indeed is the range of imagination displayed, even though we cannot shut our eyes to some palpable repetitions. In the opinion, however, of even so sympathetic a critic as Dr. Wilkinson, Blake deserves censure for having degenerated into mere monstrosity. "Of the worst aspect of Blake's genius," he says, "it is painful to speak. In his *Prophecies of America*, his *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, and a host of unpublished drawings, earth-born might has banished the heavenlier elements of art, and exists combined with all that is monstrous and diabolical. The effect of these delineations is greatly heightened by the antiquity which is engraven on the faces of those who do and suffer in them. We have the impression that we are looking down into the hells of the ancient people, the Anakim, the Nephilim, and the Rephaim. Their human forms are gigantic petrifactions, from which the fires of lust and intense selfish passion have long dissipated what was animal and vital, leaving stony limbs and countenances expressive of despair and stupid cruelty." We, on the other hand, should rather criticise Blake for having failed to be as appalling as he meant to be. His power, as it seems to us, consisted rather in the vivid imagination than in the

actual rendering of scenes of awe and horror. Far inferior artists have produced more thrilling effects of this sort with much simpler means. It would be wrong to say that his visions appear unreal, but they do appear at a remove from reality, a world seen through a glass darkly, its phantasm rather than its portrait. This, however, only applies to the inventions of Blake's own brain, which, if we may judge by the moderate development of the back head in Deville's cast, lacked the force of the animal propensities requisite for the portrayal of cruelty and horror. He could render the conceptions of others with startling force—witness the impressive delineation reproduced by us of the Architect of the Universe at work with his compasses ; and the simple pencil outline of Nebuchadnezzar in Mr. Rossetti's book, engraved by Gilchrist, where the human quadruped creeps away with an expression of overwhelming and horror-stricken dismay. This power of interpretation was to find yet finer expression in the illustration of the Book of Job.

Blake's technical defects are indicated by Messrs. Ellis and Yeats as consisting mainly in imperfect treatment of the human form from want of anatomical knowledge. He had always disliked that close study of the life which alone could have made him an able draughtsman ; it "obliterated" him, he said, and had resolved to quarrel with almost all the artists from whom he might have learned. It must be remembered in his excuse that consummate colouring and consummate draughtsmanship are seldom found associated. Those who may feel disappointed with the reproductions of Blake's mystical designs must also remember that these are but shadows of the artist's thought, which needed for its full effect the application of colour by his own hand. "Much," says Dante Rossetti, "which seems unaccountably rugged and incomplete is softened by the sweet, liquid, rainbow tints of the coloured copies into mysterious brilliancy." The effect thus obtained may perhaps be best shown by Mr. Gilchrist's eloquent description of the illuminated drawings in Lord Crewe's copy of *America*. "Turning over the leaves, it is sometimes like an increase of daylight in the retina, so fair and open is the effect of particular pages. The skies of sapphire, or gold, rayed with hues of sunset, against which stand out leaf or blossom, or pendent branch, gay with bright-plumaged birds ; the strips of emerald sward below, gemmed with flower and lizard, and enamelled

The Ancient of Days setting a Compass to the Earth. From a water-colour drawing by W. Blake. British Museum.

snake, refresh the eye continually. Some of the illustrations are of a more sombre kind. There is one in which a little corpse, white as snow, lies gleaming on the floor of a green over-arching cave, which close inspection proves to be a field of wheat, whose slender interlacing stalks, bowed by the full ear and by a gentle breeze, bend over the dead infant. The delicate network of stalks, which is carried up one side of the page, the main picture being at the bottom, and the subdued yet vivid green light shed over the whole, produce a lovely decorative effect. Decorative effect is, in fact, never lost sight of, even where the motive of the design is ghastly or terrible." Whatever the imperfections of Blake's peculiar sphere, it *was* his sphere, and probably the only department of art in which he could have obtained greatness even if his technical accomplishment had been as complete as it was the reverse. When painting on more orthodox lines he is often surprisingly tame and conventional. How remote he was from the inane when he could revel in his own conceptions may, notwithstanding the tremendous disadvantages inherent in reproduction, be judged from the illustrations to his mystical books selected for this monograph, the frontispiece and Plate IV. of *Thel*, and the two subjects from *America*.

CHAPTER III

Blake's removal to Felpham—Intercourse with Hayley—Return to London—"Jerusalem"—Connection with Cromek—Illustrations of Blair's "Grave"—Illustration of Chaucer's "Canterbury Pilgrims"—Exhibition of his Works and "Descriptive Catalogue."

BLAKE was now about to make a change in his external environment, which would have been momentous to any artist whose themes had been less exclusively discerned by the inner eye. It is an extraordinary fact, but there is absolutely no evidence that the poet who "made a rural pen" had as yet ever seen the country beyond the immediate neighbourhood of London. It is vain to speculate upon the precise modification which might have been wrought in his genius by rural nurture or foreign travel. Now he was actually to become a denizen of the country for some years. An introduction from Flaxman had made him acquainted with William Hayley, a Sussex squire and scholar, now chiefly remembered as his patron and the biographer of Cowper, but esteemed in his own day as one of the best representatives of English poetry at what seemed the period of its deepest decrepitude, though he is unaccountably omitted in Porson's catalogue of the bards of the epoch.[1] Hayley, having lost his son, a pupil of Flaxman, and his friend Cowper within a week of each other in the spring of 1800, resolved to solace his grief by writing Cowper's life, and suggested that Blake should live near him during the progress of the work to execute the engravings by which it was to be illustrated. In August, 1800, Blake removed from Lambeth to Felpham, near Bognor, on the Sussex coast, where Hayley occupied a marine villa, his own residence at Eastham being let on account of

[1] Poetis nos laetamur tribus,
Pye, Petro Pindar, parvo Pybus;
Si ulterius ire pergis,
Adde his Sir James Bland Burges.

the embarrassment of his affairs. The cottage was not provided by him for Blake, but the rent was paid by Blake himself. The change from Lambeth to a beautiful country of groves, meadows, and cornfields, with sails in the distance,

> Half lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,
> The shining sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land,

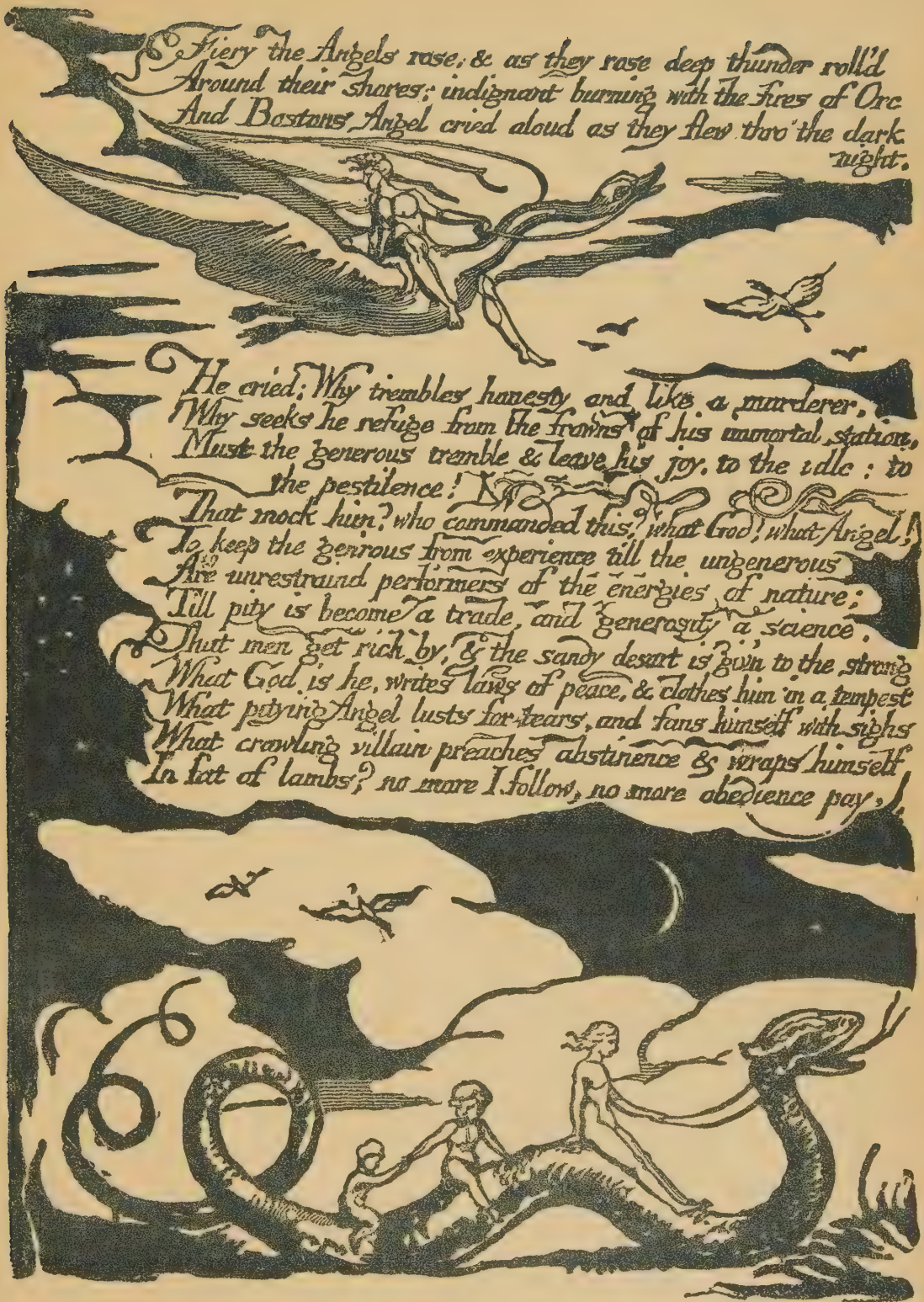
affected Blake with enthusiastic delight. "Felpham," he wrote to Flaxman, "is a sweet place for study, because it is more spiritual than London. Heaven opens here on all sides her golden gates; her windows are not obstructed by vapours; voices of celestial inhabitants are more distinctly heard, and their forms more distinctly seen, and my cottage is also a shadow of their houses." He continues: "I am more famed in Heaven for my works than I could well conceive. In my brain are studies and chambers with books and pictures of old, which I wrote and painted in ages of eternity before my mortal life; and those works are the delight and study of archangels. Why then should I be anxious about the riches or fame of mortality?" It is clear that, notwithstanding his theories of the deadness of the material creation, Blake valued natural beauty as an instrument for bringing him into more intimate connection with the visionary world. At first the desired effect was fully produced. Blake began to compose, or rather, according to his own account, to take down from supernatural dictation the *Jerusalem*, the most important in some respects of his mystical writings. Walking by the shore—the very shore where Cary was afterwards to encounter Coleridge—he habitually met Moses and the Prophets, Homer, Dante, and Milton. "All," he said, "majestic shadows, gray but luminous, and superior to the common height." A description so fine, that some may be inclined to deem it something more than a mere fancy. Unfortunately he also fell in with a fairies' funeral, a stumbling-block to the most resolute faith. By and by, however, the dampness of the cottage proved provocative of rheumatism, and, which was much more disastrous, the mental climate proved unsympathetic. Hayley's patronage of so strange a creature as he must have thought Blake does him the highest honour. He appears throughout, not only as a very kind man, but, what is less usual in a literary per-

From Blake's "America."

the embarrassment of his affairs. The cottage was not provided by [illegible] for Blake, but the rent was paid by Blake himself. The change [illegible] Lambeth to a beautiful country of groves, meadows, and cornfields with sails in the distance,

> Half lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,
> The shining sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land,

affected Blake with enthusiastic delight. "Felpham," he wrote to [illegible] "is a sweet place for study, because it is more spiritual than London. Heaven opens here on all sides her golden gates; her windows are not obstructed by vapours; voices of celestial inhabitants are more frequently heard, and their forms more distinctly seen, and my cottage is also a shadow of their houses." He continues: "I am more famed in Heaven for my works than I could well conceive. In my brain are mansions and chambers with books and pictures of old, which I wrote and painted in ages of eternity before my mortal life; and those works are the delight and study of archangels. Why then should I be anxious about the riches or fame of mortality?" It is [illegible] nar, notwithstanding his theories of the deadness of the material creation, Blake valued natural beauty as an instrument for bringing him into more intimate connection with the visionary world. At first the desired effect was fully produced. Blake began to compose, or rather, according to his own account, to take down from supernatural dictation the *Jerusalem*, the most important in some respects of his mystical writings. Walking by the shore—the very shore where Cary was afterwards to encounter Coleridge—he habitually met Moses and the Prophets, Homer, Dante, and Milton. "All," he said, "majestic shadows, gray but luminous, and superior to the common height." A description so fine, that some may be inclined to deem it something more than a mere fancy. Unfortunately he also fell in with a fairies' funeral, a stumbling-block to the most resolute faith. By and by, however, the dampness of the cottage proved provocative of rheumatism, and, [illegible] much more disastrous, the mental climate proved unsuitable. Hayley's patronage of so strange a creature as he must have [illegible] does him the highest honour. He appears throughout not only as a very kind man, but, what is less usual in a literary pa-


Fiery the Angels rose, & as they rose deep thunder roll'd
Around their shores; indignant burning with the fires of Orc
And Bostons Angel cried aloud as they flew thro' the dark night.
He cried: Why trembles honesty and like a murderer,
Why seeks he refuge from the frowns of his immortal station,
Must the generous tremble & leave his joy, to the idle: to the pestilence!
That mock him? who commanded this? what God! what Angel!
To keep the generous from experience till the ungenerous
Are unrestraind performers of the energies of nature;
Till pity is become a trade, and generosity a science.
That men get rich by, & the sandy desart is given to the strong
What God is he, writes laws of peace, & clothes him in a tempest
What pitying Angel lusts for tears, and fans himself with sighs
What crawling villain preaches abstinence & wraps himself
In fat of lambs? no more I follow, no more obedience pay.

From Blake's "America."

sonage, a very patient one. He actually instructed Blake in Greek. His kindness and patience did not, however, render him any the better poet; he was an elegant *dilettante* at the best, and Blake must have chafed at the obligation under which he felt himself to illustrate his verses. One ballad of some merit, however, "Little Tom the Sailor," inspired Blake with a striking if somewhat rude design, and he adorned Hayley's library with ideal portraits of illustrious authors. The engraving work which he had to execute for Hayley's life of Cowper was also little to his taste, but there seems no valid reason to charge him with neglect of it. His own self-reproach, indeed, ran in quite a different channel: he accused himself most seriously of unfaithfulness to his high vocation as a revealer and interpreter of spiritual things. Absence from town led him to write frequently to his friend and patron Butts, and these letters are invaluable indications not only of the frame of his mind at the time, but of its general habit. "I labour," he says, "incessantly, I accomplish not one-half of what I intend, because my abstract folly hurries me often away while I am at work, carrying me over mountains and valleys, which are not real, into a land of abstraction where spectres of the dead wander. This I endeavour to prevent; I, with my whole might, chain my feet to the world of duty and reality. But in vain! the faster I bind, the lighter is the ballast; for I, so far from being bound down, take the world with me in my flights, and often it seems lighter than a ball of wool rolled by the wind. . . . . If we fear to do the dictates of our angels, and tremble at the tasks set before us, if we refuse to do spiritual acts because of natural fears or natural desires, who can describe the dismal torments of such a state? . . . . Though I have been very unhappy, I am so no longer. I have travelled through perils and darkness not unlike a champion. I have conquered and shall go on conquering. Nothing can withstand the fury of my course among the stars of God and in the abysses of the accuser." In plain English Hayley strongly advised Blake to give up his mystical poetry and design and devote himself solely to engraving, and Blake looked upon the advice as a suggestion of the adversary. We do not know what Hayley said. If he thought that one of the *Poetical Sketches* or the *Songs of Innocence* was worth many pages of *Urizen* apart from the illustrations,

he had reason for what he thought. But Blake's lyrical gift had all but forsaken him ; he was incapable of emitting "wood-notes wild," and the only way in which he could give literary expression to the inspiration by which he justly deemed himself visited was through his rhythmical form, which to Hayley may well have seemed monstrous. It is highly probable that the pictorial part of Blake's work found no more favour with Hayley than the poetical ; at all events it is very certain that he greatly preferred his engraving, and wished Blake to follow the art by which he had the best prospect of providing for himself. Johnson and Fuseli, by Blake's own admission, had given the same advice ; and an obscure line in one of his rather undignified and splenetic epigrams against his well-intentioned friend may be interpreted as meaning that Hayley had tried to bring his wife's influence to bear upon him for this end. In any case he lost temper with Hayley, and wrote to Butts (July, 1803) : "Mr. Hayley approves of my designs as little as he does of my poems, and I have been forced to insist on his leaving me in both to my own self-will ; for I am determined to be no longer pestered with his genteel ignorance and polite disapprobation. I know myself both poet and painter, and it is not his affected contempt that can move to anything but a more assiduous pursuit of both arts." Two months afterwards he returned to London, but on better terms with Hayley ; partly on account of the latter's generous conduct in providing for his defence against a charge of using seditious language, trumped up against him by a soldier whom he had turned out of his garden. "Perhaps," he wrote to Butts, "this was suffered to give opportunity to those whom I doubted to clear themselves of all imputation." The case was tried in January, 1804, and terminated in Blake's triumphant acquittal. An old man who had attended the trial as a youth said that he remembered nothing of it except Blake's flashing eye.

The engravings executed by Blake for Hayley during his residence at Felpham were six for the life and letters of Cowper ; four original designs for ballads by Hayley, including "Poor Tom," and six engravings after Maria T. Flaxman for Hayley's *Triumphs of Temper*. He did some work for Hayley after his return to town—engravings for the *Life of Romney*, and original designs for Hayley's *Ballads on Animals*—and

corresponded with him in a friendly spirit, but the intimacy gradually died away.

Blake was profoundly influenced by his residence at Felpham in one respect; he became acquainted with opposition, and distinctly realised a power antagonistic to his aspirations. He was thus stung into self-assertion, and became hostile to the artists whose aims and methods he was unable to reconcile with his ideas. The first hints of this attitude appear in the praises he bestows upon the work of his own which chiefly occupied him at Felpham, the *Jerusalem*. "I may praise it," he says, "since I dare not pretend to be any other than the secretary; the authors are in eternity. I consider it as the grandest poem that this world contains. Allegory addressed to the intellectual powers, while it is altogether hidden from the corporeal understanding, is my definition of the most sublime poetry." Blake's allegory so effectually eludes both the reason and the understanding that Messrs. Ellis and Yeats frankly tell us that it is not for a moment to be supposed that their own elaborate interpretation will convey any idea to the mind unless it is read conjointly with the poem; and if such is the commentary what must the text be? If they are right the confusion is greatly increased by a wrong arrangement, and by the numerous interpolations which Blake subsequently introduced into the poem, which, though nominally issued in 1804, was not, they think, actually completed until about 1820. It suffers from being nearer prose than any of his former books. "When this verse was dictated to me," he says, "I considered a monotonous cadence, like that used by Milton, Shakespeare, and all writers of English blank verse, derived from the modern bondage of rhyming, to be a necessary and indispensable part of the verse. But I soon found that in the mouth of a true orator such monotony was not only awkward, but as much a bondage as rhyme itself." What can be said of the ears that could find Shakespeare's and Milton's blank verse monotonous? The truth is that Blake's originally exquisite perception of harmony had waned with his lyrical faculty, and he scoffs at what he is no longer able to produce. Yet the general grandiose effect of *Jerusalem* is undeniable. Little as we can attach any definite idea to it, it simultaneously awes and soothes like one of the great inarticulate voices of nature, the booming of the billows, or

the whisper of the winds in the wood. Occasionally we encounter some beautiful little vignette like this :—

> She creates at her will a little moving night and silence,
> With spaces of sweet gardens and a tent of elegant beauty,
> Closed in by sandy deserts, and a night of stars shining ;
> A little tender moon, and hovering angels on the wing,
> And the male gives a time and revolution to her space
> Till the time of love is passed in ever-varying delights :
> For all things exist in the human imagination.

This seems an illustration of what we have said of the dependence of Blake's poetry upon his pictorial imagination, for it is clearly nothing but a magnificent expansion of the midsummer night idyl of the glowworm shining for her mate, "with her little drop of moonlight," as Beddoes beautifully says.

In artistic merit *Jerusalem* is fully equal to any of Blake's works. There is less of the grotesque than in the others, and even more of the impressive. Much, however, depends upon the colouring, which varies greatly in different copies. Mr. Gilchrist warns us that it cannot be judged aright if we have not seen the "incomparable" copy in the possession of Lord Crewe. "It is printed in a warm reddish-brown, the exact colour of a very fine photograph ; and the broken blending of the deeper lines with the more tender shadows—all sanded over with a sort of golden mist peculiar to Blake's mode of execution—makes still more striking the resemblance to the then undiscovered handling of Nature herself." The general character of the design is excellently described by Gilchrist. "The subjects are vague and mystic as the poem itself. Female figures lie among waves full of reflected stars : a strange human image, with a swan's head and wings, floats on water in a kneeling attitude and drinks ; lovers embrace in an open water-lily ; an eagle-headed creature sits and contemplates the sun ; serpent-women are coiled with serpents ; Assyrian-looking, human-visaged bulls are seen yoked to the plough or the chariot ; rocks swallow or vomit forth human forms, or appear to amalgamate with them ; angels cross each other over wheels of flame ; and flames and hurrying figures wreathe and wind among the lines." It may indeed, like Blake's other productions of the kind, be

described as a gigantic arabesque, imbued with a passion and pathos not elsewhere attempted in this branch of art.

The subject of *Milton*, from which one of our illustrations is selected,

Design from "Milton." By W. Blake.

is, in Mr. Swinburne's words, the incarnation and descent into earth and hell of Milton, who represents redemption by inspiration. Something similar, as we have seen, is the idea of Blake's fine mystical book, *Thel*,

and the pilgrimage through a lower sphere is also found in the oldest Assyrian poetry. The book, like *Jerusalem*, is dated 1804, but, like its companion, must have been composed at Felpham. Nothing save actual and present contact with country scenes could have inspired such a passage as this, the crown of all Blake's unrhymed poetry :—

> Thou hearest the nightingale begin the song of spring :
> The lark sitting upon his earthly bed, just as the sun
> Appears, listens silent : then springing from the wavy corn-field loud
> He leads the choir of day : trill, trill, trill, trill :
> Mounting upon the wings of light into the great expanse ;
> Re-echoing against the lovely blue and shining heavenly shell :
> His little throat labours with inspiration, every feather
> On throat and breast and wings vibrates with the effluence divine :
> All nature listens silent to him, and the awful sun
> Stands still upon the mountain looking on this little bird
> With eyes of soft humility, and wonder, love, and awe.

Such a passage shows how greatly Blake might have gained as a poet had he been more intimate with external nature. Very splendid lines might be quoted from "Milton," such as "A cloudy heaven mingled with stormy seas in loudest ruin," but they are glowing light upon a black core of obscurity. Mr. Housman's judgment applies to it as to all the works of its class. "They are the sign chiefly of a beautiful nature wasted for lack of equipment in formulating disputatively what grew out of his better work with all the thoughtlessness and glory of a flower." [1]

Several lyrical poems printed in Blake's works may be assigned to this date. Some, such as "The Crystal Cabinet" and "The Mental Traveller," are extremely mystical ; others, such as "Mary," are of simply human interest ; others, such as "Auguries of Innocence," seem little remote from nonsense. "The Everlasting Gospel" expresses his profoundest ideas with startling crudity. None are wholly unmelodious,

[1] Blake is seldom detected in borrowing, but when he tells us that

> Milton's shadow fell
> Precipitant, loud thundering, into the sea of Time and space,

he is clearly, though perhaps unconsciously, reminiscent of Dyer's

> Towers
> Tumbling all precipitate down dashed,
> Rattling around, loud thundering to the Moon.

[illegible] through a lower sphere is also found in the oldest [illegible] The book, like *Jerusalem*, is dated 1804, but, like its [illegible], must have been composed at Felpham. Nothing save actual [illegible] contact with country scenes could have inspired such a passage [illegible], the crown of all Blake's unrhymed poetry :—

> Thou hearest the nightingale begin the song of spring :
> The lark sitting upon his earthly bed, just as the sun
> Appears, listens silent : then springing from the wavy corn-field loud
> He leads the choir of day : trill, trill, trill, trill :
> Mounting upon the wings of light into the great expanse ;
> Re-echoing against the lovely blue and shining heavenly shell :
> His little throat labours with inspiration, every feather
> On throat and breast and wings vibrates with the effluence divine :
> All nature listens silent to him, and the awful sun
> Stands still upon the mountain looking on this little bird
> With eyes of soft humility, and wonder, love, and awe.

Such a passage shows how greatly Blake might have gained as a poet had he been more intimate with external nature. Very splendid lines might be quoted from "Milton," such as "A cloudy heaven mingled with stormy seas in loudest ruin," but they are glowing light upon a black core of obscurity. Mr. Housman's judgment applies to it as to all the works of its class. "They are the sign chiefly of a beautiful nature wasted for lack of equipment in formulating disputatively what grew out of his better work with all the thoughtlessness and glory of a flower."[1]

Several lyrical poems printed in Blake's works may be assigned to this date. Some, such as "The Crystal Cabinet" and "The Mental Traveller," are extremely mystical ; others, such as "Mary," are of simply human interest ; others, such as "Auguries of Innocence," seem little remote from nonsense. "The Everlasting Gospel" expresses his profoundest ideas with startling crudity. None are wholly unmelodious,

[1] Blake is seldom detected in borrowing, but when he tells us that

> Milton's shadow fell
> Precipitant, loud thundering, into the sea of Time and space,

is clearly, though perhaps unconsciously, reminiscent of Dyer's

> Towers
> Tumbling all precipitate down dashed,
> Rattling around, loud thundering to the Moon.

What time the thirteen Governors that England sent con-vene
In Bernards house; the flames coverd the land, they rouze they
Shaking their mental chains they rush in fury to the sea
To quench their anguish: at the feet of Washington down fall'n
They grovel on the sand and writhing lie: while all
The British soldiers thro' the thirteen states sent up a howl
Of anguish: threw their swords & muskets to the earth & ran
From their encampments and dark castles seeking where to hide
From the grim flames: and from the visions of Orc; in sight
Of Albions Angel; who enrag'd his secret clouds opend
From north to south, and burnt outstretchd on wings of wrath cover-
The eastern sky, spreading his awful wings across the heavens;
Beneath him roll'd his numerous hosts, all Albions Angels camp'd
Darkend the Atlantic mountains & their trumpets shook the valleys
Arm'd with diseases of the earth to cast upon the Abyss,
Their numbers forty millions, musturing in the eastern sky.

From Blake's "America."

but the old bewitching melody has gone from all, unless from the lines introductory to "Milton":—

> And did those feet in ancient time
> Walk upon England's mountains green;
> And was the holy Lamb of God
> On England's pleasant pastures seen?
>
> And did the countenance divine
> Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
> And was Jerusalem builded here
> Among these dark Satanic mills?
>
> Bring me my bow of burning gold,
> Bring me my arrows of desire:
> Bring me my spear: O clouds unfold!
> Bring me my chariot of fire!
>
> I will not cease from mental fight,
> Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
> Till we have built Jerusalem
> In England's green and pleasant land.

Blake, who had settled at 17, South Molton Street, Oxford Street, was in the meantime dealing with a very different patron from Hayley, Robert Cromek, a "stickit" engraver turned printseller, who tricked if he did not actually defraud him, but who is entitled to the credit of having recognised his genius, and of having brought forward works of his more adapted to attract public notice than anything he had yet done. These were the twelve illustrations to Blair's *Grave*, full of Blake's peculiar genius and at the same time intelligible to all. They had been executed in 1804 and 1805. Cromek, who afterwards admitted that they were worth sixty guineas, obtained them for twenty from the artist, who had intended to publish them himself. It had been understood that Blake should have engraved them, but Cromek, wisely from his own point of view, but wrongfully as regarded Blake, intrusted the task to Schiavonetti. As a frontispiece, they were accompanied by a portrait of Blake from a drawing by Phillips, also engraved by Schiavonetti, which we have reproduced. Thanks to Cromek's judicious engineering, and the popularity of the poem illustrated, the adventure proved a considerable success. "It is the only volume with Blake's name on the title-page," says Mr. Gilchrist, "which is not scarce." The publication took place in 1808.

Portrait of William Blake. From the engraving by L. Schiavonetti, after T. Phillips, R.A.

In the interval Cromek, calling upon Blake, had seen a pencil sketch of a design for the procession of Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims. Failing to obtain a finished drawing from the artist, who resented his previous treatment, he proposed the subject to Stothard, withholding as apart from all questions of Stothard's "frigid and exemplary" character would be most natural for him to do, all mention of Blake's drawing. Stothard accepted the commission ; his elaborate oil picture was exhibited in 1807 with great success, but at the cost of a breach with Blake, who went so far in his denunciation, not only of Cromek's underhand dealing but of the defects which he found in Stothard's work, that when he afterwards sought a reconciliation Stothard remained impervious. Determined to vindicate his superiority, Blake completed, exhibited, and engraved his own fresco. The exhibition, accompanied by a remarkable "descriptive catalogue," to which we shall return—was not the success it might have been in the hands of the shrewd Cromek. The exhibition room was watched by Blake's brother James, whom Crabb Robinson asked whether he should be allowed to come again free in consideration of having bought four copies of the descriptive catalogue. "As long as you live," answered the overjoyed custodian. The success of the engraving was proportionate to that of the exhibition ; though it might have been otherwise if the roughness of the original design had been smoothed down by the deft Schiavonetti. "Blake's production," says Mr. Rossetti, "is as unattractive as Stothard's is facile ; as hard and strong as Stothard's is limp ; one face in Blake's design means as much on the part of the artist, and takes as much scrutiny and turning over of thought on the part of the spectator, as all the pretty *fantoccini* and their sprightly little horses in Stothard's work." The engraving of the *Pilgrimage* in Gilchrist's biography evinces the justice of this criticism ; though Ellis and Yeats rightly add that Blake has given all his personages the eyes of visionaries. "A work of wonderful power and spirit, hard and dry, yet with grace," says Charles Lamb. The original fresco was purchased by Elijah's raven, the ever-ready Butts.

We must now return to the illustrations to Blair's *Grave*, which are not only the most popular of Blake's works, but among his greatest. He showed in general more vigour in dealing with the conceptions of another than with his own, the latter imbibing an element of fanciful grace from the gentle spirit which produced them. Hence *The Soul*

Exploring the Recesses of the Grave, reproduced from *Thel*, though one of the most poetical of the designs, is one of the least powerful. His rendering of Blair's thoughts is marvellously direct and impressive, whether the passion depicted be joy, as in *The Reunion of the Soul and the Body* (given here), or horror, as in *The Death of the Strong Wicked Man*, or an intermediate shade, as in *The Soul hovering over the Body*. None of these and few of the series, once seen, will easily be forgotten. The most famous, and deservedly so, is the marvellous one, a combination of two designs in *America* and *The Gates of Paradise*, where the aged man, impelled by a strong wind, totters towards the portal of the sepulchre, on the summit of which sits the rejuvenated spirit, personified by a strong youth, rejoicing in his deliverance, but dazzled by the as yet unwonted light. In all these designs the element of seemly, yet slightly formal and conventional grace which Blake had learned from Stothard, is very conspicuous. The least successful, as seems to us, is *The Last Judgment*, where Blake appears as a minor Michael Angelo, but this work as engraved differs widely from his description of the work as exhibited. It may well be believed that the modified version was distinguished by great splendour of colouring.

Other works of this period were two small frescoes exhibited at the Academy in 1808, *Christ in the Sepulchre* and *Jacob's Dream;* the "ornamental device" engraved (by Cromek) along with the frontispiece to Malkin's *Father's Memoirs of his Child*, a graceful and pathetic composition; three illustrations to Shakespeare, one of which, the highly imaginative conception of the appearance of the Ghost to Hamlet, is engraved in Gilchrist's biography; *The Babylonian Woman on the Seven-headed Beast* (1809) reproduced here; a continuous series of designs produced for Mr. Butts, to be mentioned more fully hereafter; and the pictures displayed along with *The Canterbury Pilgrims* at its exhibition (1809). We must now devote some attention to Blake's appearance as an æsthetic writer in the *Descriptive Catalogue* he put forth on this occasion, with which his other principal deliverances on the subject of art may be advantageously grouped.

Blake's *Descriptive Catalogue* and his *Appeal to the Public* to judge between himself and his rivals in the department of engraving, are a singular mixture of gold and clay. The dignity which characterised his demeanour in life forsakes him as soon as he takes the pen into his hand,

The Reunion of Soul and Body. From Blair's "Grave," illustrated by W. Blake.

and he reviles Stothard, Woollett, and others in a strain inconsistent with self-respect on his own part, even had his criticism been well founded. As a matter of fact, it seems to have had no foundation, and assuredly has not affected the reputation of his antagonists in the smallest degree. At the same time it is impossible not to be moved by his earnestness. He is evidently contending for principles of great importance to himself, and through the mist of his confused and ungrammatical expression we seem to catch glimpses of high and serious truth. A refreshing contrast is afforded by the passages devoted to Chaucer, which are truly admirable for their felicitous insight into the old poet. "For all who have read Blake," justly say Messrs. Ellis and Yeats, "Chaucer is something more than the sweet spinner of rhyming gossip that he seems to most." Like Ruskin, and indeed all men of creative power, Blake is on much safer ground when he extols than when he censures. To much the same period belongs a remarkable paper on his *Last Judgment*, published by Gilchrist from his MS. Nothing of his admits us so fully into the sanctuary of his mind. "*The Last Judgment*," he begins, "is not fable or allegory, but vision. Fable, or allegory, is a totally distinct and inferior kind of poetry. Vision, or imagination, is a representation of what actually exists, really and unchangeably." Then follows an extremely graphic and vivid description of the painting, interspersed with profound remarks, such as "Man passes on, but states remain for ever; he passes through them like a traveller, who may as well suppose that the places he has passed through exist no more as a man may suppose that the states he has passed through exist no more; everything is eternal." "I have seen, when at a distance, multitudes of men in harmony appear like a single infant."[1] "In Hell all is self-righteousness; there is no such

[1] The same remark is the subject of one of the finest passages of Lucretius :—

Praeterea, magnae legiones quom loca cursu
Camporum complent, belli simulacra cientes,
Fulgur ibi ad cœlum se tollit, totaque circum
Aere renidescit tellus, subterque virum vi
Excitur pedibus sonitus, clamoreque montes
Icti rejectant voces ad sidera mundi;
Et circumvolitant equites, mediosque repente
Tramittunt, valido quatientes impete, campos;
Et tamen est quidam locus altis montibus, unde
Stare videntur, et in campis consistere fulgur.

The Babylonian Woman on the Seven headed Beast. From a water-colour drawing by W. Blake. British Museum.

thing there as forgiveness of sin. He who does forgive sin is crucified as an abettor of criminals." "Angels are happier than men and devils, because they are not always prying after good and evil in one another, and eating the tree of knowledge for Satan's gratification." "*The Last Judgment* is an overwhelming of bad art and science." Finally, in words that state his own case as respects his reputed delusions, he says: "I assert for myself that I do not behold the outward creation, and that to me it is hindrance and not action. 'What!' it will be questioned, 'when the sun rises, do you not see a round disc of fire, somewhat like a guinea?' Oh! no! no! I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host, crying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty!' I question not my corporeal eye, any more than I would question a window concerning a sight. I look through it, and not with it."

Blake's conception of the sun may be compared with Dante's vision of the angels with the cloud :—

> Then lifting up mine eyes, as the tears came,
> I saw the Angels, like a rain of manna,
> In a long flight flying back heavenward;
> Having a little cloud in front of them,
> After the which they went, and said, "Hosanna!"
> And if they had said more, you should have heard.

An earlier acquaintance with Dante would undoubtedly have exerted a great influence upon Blake.

Not the least interesting part of Blake's catalogue is his description of the pictures accompanying his *Canterbury Pilgrims*, which include the strange patriotic allegories of *Nelson guiding Leviathan* and *Pitt guiding Behemoth*, the latter of which is now in the National Gallery; *Satan calling up his Legions*; *The Bard*, described by Rossetti as "a gorgeous piece of colour tone"; an idyll, charming in conception whatever it may have been in execution, representing goats nibbling the vine leaves that form the sole drapery of savage maidens; and Arthur's battle of Camlan, whence only three—the strongest, the most beautiful, and the ugliest of champions—escaped with their lives. This picture Seymour Kirkup thought Blake's best, and Allan Cunningham his worst. Kirkup, Mr. Swinburne tells us, remembered to the last "the fury and splendour of energy there contrasted with the serene ardour of simply beautiful

courage, the violent life of the design, and the fierce distance of fluctuating battle." Blake's estimate of his powers, as conveyed in his descriptions of his works, certainly does not err on the side of modesty ; perhaps he thought with Goethe that "Nur die Lumpen sind bescheiden." It is a more serious matter that the descriptions are crammed with statements far more significant than Blake's visions of a condition of mental disorder, such as that the Greek marbles are copies of the works of the Asiatic patriarchs ; that no one painted in oil, except by accident, before Vandyke ; that ancient British heroes dwell to this day on Snowdon "in naked simplicity" : a species of Welsh Mahatmas, as it would appear. It would have been a judicious emendation if any one had suggested the substitution of "lying spirits" when the artist spoke of himself as "molested by blotting and blurring demons."

More important than these idle extravagances, though extravagant enough, are the annotations on Reynolds's discourses, written a few years afterwards. To read Blake's abuse of this great artist with any patience, one must remember that his expressions require to be translated out of his peculiar dialect into ordinary speech ; as when, for example, he says that Correggio is a most effeminate and cruel demon, he only means that he is a bad model for artists to follow. Yet there is a great and serious truth lying at the bottom of Blake's declamation, and his protest against the apparent tendency of Reynolds to inculcate the feasibility of manufacturing genius by study was not uncalled for. What he did not sufficiently remember was that the number of artists capable of what Plato calls divine insanity, must always be very small, and that Reynolds's precepts may be very serviceable for the rank and file of the great army. As his denunciation of Reynolds was partly prompted by personal grievances (not the less real, if the apparent paradox may be excused, for being imaginary), it is the more to his honour to find him breaking out into genuine admiration whenever, in Swedenborg's phrase, the dry rod blossoms as Reynolds affirms a truth. It is also pleasant to receive Samuel Palmer's assurance that Blake's splenetic outbreaks in print astonished those accustomed to his catholicity of criticism in conversation.

CHAPTER IV

Blake's Life in South Molton Street and Fountain Court—Acquaintance with Linnell and Varley—Drawings of Visionary Heads—Miscellaneous Works in Private Collections—Illustrations of "Job"—Work as an Engraver—Acquaintance with Crabb Robinson—Illustrations of Dante—Declining health and death—General observations—His principal Biographer and Critics.

VERY little is known of Blake's life for several years after his exhibition. William Carey, a rare example of disinterestedness among picture-dealers, for he praised Blake enthusiastically without having dealt with him, says in his exposition of West's *Death on the Pale Horse* (1817), "So entire is the uncertainty in which he is involved that after many inquiries I meet with some in doubt whether he is still in existence. But I have accidentally learned since I commenced these remarks that he is now a resident in London." He was, in fact, continuing to live on his second floor in South Molton Street, poor, but content, subsisting from day to day by hack work as an engraver, and the occasional sale of a water-colour design or a coloured copy of one of his books, but nowise squalid, abject, or destitute. He was no longer able to publish on his own account as of old, and the poems which he continued to produce abundantly, all of which have perished, met with the reception which was to be expected from earthly publishers. Blake smiled in pity, assured that, in his own figurative language, they were handsomely printed and bound in heaven, and eagerly perused by spiritual intelligences. "I should be sorry," he afterwards said to Crabb Robinson, "if I had any earthly fame, for whatever natural glory a man has is so much taken from his spiritual glory." He certainly had not thought so when he published his catalogue; but there is no question of his perfect sincerity when he added, "I wish to do nothing for profit. I wish to live for art." Though he had said "Thought is act: Christ's acts were nothing to Cæsar's if this is not so";

so intense was his own devotion to labour that for two years he never quitted his lodging, except (for the ridiculous will intrude where it is not wanted—imps grin in the cells of anchorites—) for a pot of porter Even while he engraved he read, as the plate-marks on his books attest. Flaxman, his steady friend from youth, found him some work in engraving, and praised him in conversation. "But Blake's a wild enthusiast, isn't he?" "Some think *me* an enthusiast," answered Flaxman, who was, in truth, more than half a Swedenborgian.

From this hermit's existence Blake once more emerges, in 1818, into comparative publicity through the intimacy he formed with a young painter of promise, which he was destined to more than redeem. This was John Linnell, who was introduced to him by Mr. George Cumberland, of Bristol, an enlightened patron of art. At this time Linnell was largely engaged in portrait painting, and the plate of the portrait selected here for reproduction, that of Wilson Lowry, Esq., appears to have been worked upon by both him and Blake, bearing the name of each. Linnell, though neither gentle nor mystical, lived much in the world of the spirit, and, without sharing Blake's peculiarities, was rather attracted than repelled by them. Within a few days after making Blake's acquaintance he had found him work to the amount of fifteen guineas, and gradually introduced him to patrons, including Sir Thomas Lawrence, a great gentleman as well as a fine painter, who took the notice of Blake which it became him to take in his position as President of the Royal Academy. Blake never encountered hostility from artists of true eminence. Reynolds advised him wisely, though he would not think so. Lawrence patronised him; and Flaxman, Fuseli, Stothard, Linnell were, so far as he permitted them, real friends. Within a few years Linnell had introduced him to a younger circle, ready in a measure to sit at his feet, and the rejected stone was honourably built into the corner. Of these we shall have to speak afterwards, but one important intimacy mainly belongs to the period of 1818–21. This was his acquaintance with John Varley, famed as one of the fathers of English water-colour painting, but even more renowned as an astrologer. Indeed, some of the stories told of his successful predictions are less startling to the uninitiated than to astrologers themselves, who cannot comprehend on what principle of the art they could be made. They certainly

were not arrived at by vision or revelation, for the good Varley was a most unspiritual personage, the very antipodes of seer or anchorite, big, sanguine, jovial, and everlastingly in the claws of the bailiffs. Astrology, therefore, a study which, with all its fascination for an imaginative mind, requires nothing but observation and calculation, was the only occult science open to him ; for magic, although a diabolical pursuit, occasionally demands an amount of fasting inconvenient even for a saint. Varley would have wished to go further, and finding the perception of visions inconsistent with his own corporeal and spiritual constitution, was delighted to make the acquaintance of one who to this end needed but to open his eyes. He speedily developed the practical idea that Blake should depict the spiritual entities which he beheld. Blake forthwith set to work, and ere long the portfolios of Varley and Linnell were enriched with those ghosts of fleas, portraits of Edward the Third, and men who built the pyramids, which are better known to many than anything he ever did, and are assuredly no mean examples of his imaginative power. "All," says Gilchrist, "are marked by a decisive portrait-like character, and are evidently literal portraits of what Blake's imaginative eye beheld." [1] This is corroborated by the account of Varley, who says, "On hearing of this spiritual apparition of a Flea, I asked him if he could draw for me the resemblance of what he saw. He instantly said, 'I see him now before me.' I therefore gave him a paper and a pencil, with which he drew the portrait of which a facsimile is given in this number [of Varley's *Zodiacal Physiognomy*]. I felt convinced by his mode of proceeding that he had a real image before him ; for he left off and began on another part of the paper to make a separate drawing of the mouth of the Flea, which the spirit having opened he was prevented from proceeding with the first sketch till he had closed it." It was "an idea with the force of a sensation," as Peacock's philosopher classifies the apparition in *Nightmare Abbey*. Shelley, who also saw visions, has enriched his note-books with similar delineations of imaginary figures, generally vague and careless, but sometimes very Blake-like. One of Linnell's most spirited studies from life, engraved in Story's biography, represents Blake and Varley in discussion.

[1] Not always without assistance from the eyes of others ; for the portrait of Edward the First is clearly a reminiscence of that which in Blake's time adorned Goldsmith's History.

These drawings were mostly executed in 1819 and 1820. In the latter year Blake lost his chief patron Butts, whose walls, indeed, had become so crowded with his works that he had almost ceased to give him

Portrait of Wilson Lowry. By John Linnell. Engraved by Blake and Linnell.

commissions. The greater part of the collection was dispersed in 1852, but the zeal of Mr. W. M. Rossetti traced most of its constituents out, and reference to his notes, printed in the second volume of Gilchrist's biography, will enable us to convey some faint notion of its manifold

opulence. Putting the *Job* aside for the present, the most remarkable appear to be the nine designs for *Paradise Lost*, the property of Mr. J. C. Strange, in which, says Mr. Rossetti, Blake is king of all his powers of design, draughtsmanship, conception, spiritual meaning, and impression. Another set, belonging to Mr. Aspland, of Liverpool, omits one subject and adds four. Another set of Miltonic designs for *Comus*, rather distinguished by grace than grandeur, has been recently published by Mr. Quaritch. Another set of no less than one hundred and eighteen designs for Gray's works, in 1860 in the possession of the Duke of Hamilton, are reputed to rank among Blake's finest productions, but have not been inspected by any one competent to describe them. Among others especially commended by Mr. Rossetti are *The Sacrifice of Jephthah's Daughter*, *Ruth*, *The Judgment of Paris*, *The Wise and Foolish Virgins*, *Fire*, *Famine*, *Samson subdued*, *The Finding of Moses*, *Moses erecting the Brazen Serpent*, *The Ghost of Samuel appearing to Saul*, *The Entombment*, *The Sealing of the Sepulchre*, *The Angel rolling the Stone from the Sepulchre*, *The River of Life*, and *Hecate*. To these may be added *The Resurrection of the Dead*, now in the British Museum, reproduced by us. Many others, not belonging to the Butts collection, are described with equal enthusiasm ; and, apart from all questions of technical execution, usually splendid, but lost upon those who have not access to the original works, it may be said that the conceptions, as described by Mr. Rossetti, would be impossible to one unendowed with the highest artistic imagination, and that the body is worthy of the spirit.

Prominent among these designs are the set of illustrations to *Job*, now the property of the Earl of Crewe. A duplicate set belonged to Mr. Linnell, who, "discounting as it were," says Gilchrist, "Blake's bill on posterity when no one else would," commissioned this from him, tracing the outlines from Butt's copy himself, and handing them over to Blake to complete. This was done in September, 1821, and when the drawings were completed in 1823 Linnell went further still, and commissioned Blake to engrave them, a stroke which has probably effected more than anything else for the artist's fame, for the drawings which have set him on such a pinnacle, if unengraved, would have remained virtually unknown to the world. The terms also were liberal. Blake was to receive £100 for the twenty-two plates and £100 more out of the profits.

The Resurrection of the Dead. From a water-colour drawing by W. Blake. British Museum.

When the publication barely covered its expenses, Linnell, reflecting that the plates remained in his possession in virtue of the agreement, not unreasonably but very handsomely allowed Blake £50 more. But for this manna from heaven Blake's last years would have been spent in engraving pigs and poultry after Morland. Linnell, who was himself an excellent engraver, further conferred an important benefit upon him by making him acquainted with the best style of Italian engraving. Blake proved a docile pupil at sixty-five, and his plates to *Job* are not only technically the best he ever executed, but occupy an important place in the history of the art.

The glory of *Job*, however, is not in the engraving, but in the invention, which, beautiful in the soft and idyllic passages, rises into sublimity when the theme appeals strongly to the creative imagination. It is especially remarkable as being one of the very few instances of a worthy representation of the Almighty. The tender humanities of Christian art are absent: all is awful, Hebraic, and strictly monotheistic. Among the most remarkable designs may be noted that where the exulting fiend pulls down the mansion upon Job's sons and daughters (reproduced here); the frantic speed of the messenger of evil, who bursts out with his tale before he is well within hearing, while another follows with equal haste hard upon him, and the uninterested sheep graze on undisturbed; the terrible scene where Satan, a figure repeated in essentials from works of earlier date, smites the prostrate Job with sore boils; Eliphaz besieged with phantoms, to all seeming not less real than himself (also given here); the morning stars singing together; the downfall of the wicked; and the Lord answering Job out of the whirlwind. Passages even of the less striking designs often have a singular fascination, such as the night-piercing stars in the Elihu scene, which would be impressive in the absence of any human figure; Behemoth and Leviathan, the *ne plus ultra* of grotesque grandeur, which we have also given; and the bowed backs of Job's accusing friends when the Lord blesses him.[1] On the whole,

[1] It is observable that Job's wife, so disadvantageously treated in Scripture, is by Blake represented as the sufferer's loving companion throughout. This was probably out of tenderness to Mrs. Blake, from whom, indeed, upon a comparison between her portrait as a young woman and the ideal representation of the Patriarch's spouse, his model for the latter would seem to have been derived; but if so the inference seems justified that Blake regarded the story of Job as emblematic of his own history.

though others of Blake's designs may be more transcendent of ordinary human faculty, he has scarcely executed anything displaying all his faculties so well combined and in such perfect equilibrium ; and, were it necessary to rest his fame upon one set of works, this would probably be selected. As a scriptural theme it appealed with especial strength to English sympathies, and having been selected by Gilchrist for reproduction, it is more widely known than any of his works except the illustrations to Blair's *Grave*. "The original water-colour designs," Rossetti says, "are much larger than the engravings, and generally pale in colour, with a less full and concentrated effect than the engravings, and by no means equal to them in power and splendid decorative treatment of the light and shade. On the other hand, they are often completer and naturally freer in expression, and do not exhibit a certain tendency to over-sturdiness of build and physiognomy in the figures." Fine as is the figure of Satan in *The Destruction of Job's Sons and Daughters*, it is, Mr. Rossetti thinks, much finer in the water colour. On the other hand, "the effect of sublimity and multitude in *When the morning stars sang together* is centupled in the engraving by adding the upraised arms of two other angels to right and left, passing out of the composition." The whole account suggests how desirable it would be to have many of Blake's unpublished water colours translated into black and white, could engraver or etcher of the needful force be found.

Woodcut from Thornton's Pastoral.

In 1821 Blake had performed another work of moment, his first and last wood-engravings. These were to illustrate Phillips's imitation of Virgil's first pastoral, republished by Dr. Thornton, a physician and botanist. Blake was a novice in this branch of art, and the cuts answer to Dr. Thornton's own description of them : "They display less of art than of genius." But nothing could more effectually confirm the principle enunciated by their critic in the *Athenæum* : "Amid all drawbacks there exists a power in the work of the man of genius which no one but himself

can utter fully." Rude as they are, their force is extraordinary; few things can be more truly magical than the glimpse of distant sea in the second of those engraved by Gilchrist. At the same time they are not in the least Virgilian, and in this respect form an instructive contrast with the exquisite though unfinished Virgilian illustrations of Samuel Palmer. Palmer, though putting in a cypress now and then as a tribute to *couleur locale*, provides Virgil substantially with the same style of illustration as he had been producing all his life for other ends, and yet this seems as appropriate to the text as Blake's is discrepant. It is interesting to speculate what effect an Italian residence of two or three years, such as Palmer had enjoyed, would have produced upon Blake beyond the inevitable one of dissipating his monstrous delusions about Italian artists. He would probably have gone chiefly with the view of studying Michael Angelo, but we suspect that the influences of Italian landscape would in the long run have proved fully as potent.

In 1821 Blake removed from South Molton Street to Fountain Court, Strand, near the Savoy, where he occupied two rooms on the first floor. The reason may have been that the house was kept by a brother-in-law of Mrs. Blake's named Baines, the only trace we have of any connection with his wife's family. Economy too may have had its influence; his means were very low, not yet improved by the donation of £25 he received from the Academy next year, or his arrangement with Linnell in the year following. At the worst, however, the rooms were always clean and neat, thanks to Mrs. Blake's industry and devotion; and Blake's manner always had the simplicity and dignity of a gentleman. That his circumstances improved was almost entirely the doing of Linnell, who not only provided for his wants by commissions, but made him what his genius had never made him, the patriarch of a band of admirers, almost disciples. Coming frequently to visit Linnell at Hampstead, Blake fell in with a group of young men who resorted thither, four of whom at least—Samuel Palmer, Edward Calvert, George Richmond, and F. O. Finch—became artists of great distinction. One characteristic these young men had in common: they were as far as possible from the theory of art for art's sake, but only valued art as the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace of consecration to the Power behind Nature. The biographies of Palmer and Calvert disclose the priestlike

spirit in which they wrought, a spirit akin to that of their pre-Raphaelite successors, but apparently less impregnated with the ordinary atmosphere of the studio. These were just the men to treat the aged Blake as the

The Destruction of Job's Sons and Daughters. From the "Book of Job." By W. Blake.

antediluvian youth ought to have treated the aged Jubal; and the patriarchal influence is visible both in their writings and their works, not always to the advantage of the latter, if we may judge by the examples

preserved of Palmer's early labours. But all seemed fair in the light of fond retrospect. Twenty-eight years after Blake's death Samuel Palmer addressed a letter to Mr. Gilchrist, long and full of interesting particulars relating to Blake's opinions on art; but the gist of the estimate of the man is conveyed in few words. "In him you saw at once the Maker, the Inventor; one of the few in any age; a fitting companion for Dante. He was energy itself, and shed around him a kindling influence, an atmosphere of life, full of the ideal. He was a man without a mask; his aim single, his path straightforwardness, and his wants few; so he was free, noble, and happy."

A very important witness to Blake's demeanour and opinions in his later years is Henry Crabb Robinson the diarist, whom we have already met as a visitor to Blake's exhibition, and who had made him the subject of an essay in a German periodical. Robinson was the right man in the right place, not being a mystic or enthusiast to fall down at Blake's feet, nor yet a man of the world to deride him as a visionary, but an inquisitive observer of great intellectual range and most kindly and tolerant disposition, ready to allow that things might exist of which his philosophy had not dreamed, and whom abnormal opinions, if held in evident sincerity, might startle but could hardly shock. "It is strange," says he, "that I who have no imagination, nor any power beyond that of a logical understanding, should yet have a great respect for religious mystics." Thrown into Blake's company in 1825, he has recorded his conversations with him at considerable length in his delightful diary, as yet but partially published. His description of Blake's "interesting appearance" agrees with that of his own circle. "He is pale, with a Socratic countenance, and an expression of great sweetness, though with something of languor about it except when animated, and then he has about him an air of inspiration. The tone and manner are incommunicable. There are a natural sweetness and gentility about him which are delightful." Having heard of Blake's visions, Robinson was not surprised to find him asserting that the visionary gift was innate in all men, and only torpid for want of cultivation; but he must have had much ado to digest such statements as that the world was flat, that Wordsworth was a Pagan, and that "what are called the vices in the natural world are the highest sublimities in the spiritual world." Not understanding that by atheism

Blake meant, in his own words, "whatever assumes the reality of the natural and unspiritual world," Robinson was naturally aghast when Locke was classed with atheists, and ventured what must have appeared to him the conclusive rejoinder that Locke had written in defence of Christianity. Blake, who probably understood Robinson's definition of atheism as little as Robinson did his, "made no reply." Some of Blake's remarks are well worthy of preservation. "Art is inspiration. When Michael

With Dreams upon my Bed thou scarest me. From the "Book of Job." By W. Blake.

Angelo, or Raphael, or Mr. Flaxman does any of his fine things, he does them in the spirit." "Irving is a *sent* man. But they who are sent go further sometimes than they ought." "Dante saw devils where I see none."

Dante must have been much in Blake's thoughts just then, for Robinson found him occupied with the long series of illustrations of the poet commissioned by Linnell, the last important work of his life. The

history of the commission is thus related by Linnell's biographer, Mr. Story. "Although the *Job* had been paid for, Linnell continued to give him money weekly. Blake said, 'I do not know how I shall ever repay you.' Linnell replied, 'I do not want you to repay me. I am only too glad to be able to serve you. What I would like, however, if you do anything for me, is that you should make some designs for Dante's *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso*.' Blake entered upon the work with alacrity, concurrently with the engraving of the *Job* designs, and the two together occupied the old man for the rest of his life." During all this period Linnell was remitting Blake money, as the latter's notes in acknowledgment prove. Linnell undoubtedly acquired the designs at a low price, but immediately upon Blake's death he endeavoured to dispose of them for the benefit of the widow. Failing in this he kept them, never attempting to make anything by them ; and they are still in the possession of his family.

Blake studied Italian to qualify himself more effectually for his task, and is said to have acquired it ; when Robinson saw him, however, at an early stage of the commission it is true, he was working by the aid of Cary's English version. He executed no less than ninety-eight drawings, several of which were left in an unfinished state. Seven have been engraved. The merits of the series have been variously estimated. Mr. Rossetti considers them "on the whole a very fine series, though not uniformly equal in merit." Mr. Yeats, so well qualified by his own imaginative gift to enter into the merit of Blake's work, thinks them the finest of all his productions. Robinson, who saw Blake at work upon them, says, "They evince a power I should not have anticipated of grouping, and of throwing grace and interest over conceptions monstrous and horrible." For our own part, we must regretfully admit that when we saw them at the Old Masters' exhibition the monstrosity and horror appeared more evident than the grace and interest. We could not deem Dante's conceptions adequately rendered ; the colour, too, often seemed harsh and extravagant. Blake went on working upon them until his death, when Mrs. Blake sent them to Linnell. They thus escaped the fate of Blake's other artistic and literary remains left in his widow's possession, which after her death were appropriated, apparently without any legal authority, by a person named Tatham, who had been much about

Blake in his later years, and who ultimately destroyed them in deference to the mandate of a religious sect with which he had become connected ![1]

Behemoth and Leviathan. From the "Book of Job." By W. Blake.

[1] It must be now about thirty-five years since we received a visit from this person; how he had found us out we cannot recollect. He stated that he had lived by painting miniatures, and, having been deprived of his customers by photography, proposed to

The end was now near. During 1827 Blake's health greatly failed from catarrh and dysentery, and he could no longer go up to Hampstead to see Linnell. Linnell wished him to quit the damp neighbourhood of the river, and live in his own house in Cirencester Place, part only of which he used as a studio. But Blake said, "I cannot get my mind out of a state of terrible fear at such a step." He also said, "I am too much attached to Dante to think much of anything else." One of his last works was the colouring of *The Ancient of Days* for the elder Tatham, who paid him at a higher rate than he was accustomed to receive. Blake accordingly worked his hardest, and when it was finished "threw it from him, and with an air of exulting triumph exclaimed, 'There, that will do, I cannot mend it.'" Later still he exclaimed to his wife, "You have ever been an angel to me, I will draw you," and produced a sketch, "interesting, but not like." On August 12 he died, "composing and uttering songs to his Maker." He was buried in Bunhill Fields, in a grave which cannot now be identified. It is little to the honour of his countrymen that no public memorial of him should exist. A better one could not be than his own *Death's Door* in the illustration to Blair's *Grave*, treated as a bas-relief with the necessary modifications.

The artist whose life had been spent in a condition so little remote from penury did not leave a single debt, and the accumulated stock of his works sufficed to support his widow in comfort for the four years for which she survived him. Friends, indeed, aided, Linnell and Tatham successively giving her house-room, and others assiduously recommending her stores of drawings to wealthy patrons. She died in Upper Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, and was buried beside her husband in Bunhill Fields.

The artistic processes used by Blake are a subject of considerable discussion. Notwithstanding his constant description of his pictures as

devote himself to historical painting, to the great prospective advantage of British art. He considered his forte to be the delineation of bare arms, and wished to be recommended to a subject which would afford scope for the exercise of this department of the pictorial faculty. We suggested the interment of the young princes in the Tower; he thanked us and departed; and we saw no more of him. He admitted having parted with all the relics of Blake that had been in his possession, but sought to convey that they had been sold, not destroyed, which may be partly true.

"frescoes," it seems certain that he never resorted to fresco in the ordinary acceptation of the term. Linnell, who must have been exceedingly familiar with his work, told Mr. Gilchrist: "He evidently founded his claim to the name fresco on the material he used, which was water-colour on a plaster ground (literally glue and whiting); but he always called it either fresco, gesso, or plaster." Linnell added that when he himself obtained from Italy the first copy that ever came to England of Cennino Cennini's *Trattato della Pittura*, a sixteenth-century treatise, edited in 1822 from the original MS., Blake, who was soon able to read it, "was gratified to find that he had been using the same materials and methods in painting as Cennini describes, particularly the carpenter's glue." "Unfortunately," says Linnell, "he laid this ground on too much like plaster to a wall," and when this was so applied to canvas or linen the picture was sure to crack, and many of Blake's best works have suffered great injury. Oil he disliked and vituperated. The reason probably was that, contrary to what might have been expected, his system of execution was by no means bold and dashing, but deliberate and even slow. He drew a rough dotted line with pencil, then with ink, then colour, filling in cautiously and carefully. All the grand efforts of design, he thought, depended on niceties not to be got at once. He seems, in fact, to have worked very much in the spirit of the mediæval illuminators, and the general aspect of a page of one of his Prophetical Books reminds us forcibly of one of their scrolls. Whether any direct influence from them upon him is traceable would be difficult to determine. Keats had evidently seen illuminated manuscripts, and been deeply impressed by them; but nearly forty years elapsed between the publication of the first of Blake's Prophetical Books and the composition of Keats's *Eve of St. Mark*. In one respect Blake certainly differed from the ancient miniaturists; he wrought mainly from reminiscence, and disliked painting with his eye on the object. His memory for natural forms must have been very powerful.

Blake is endowed in a very marked degree with the interest ascribed by Goethe to *Problematische Naturen*, men who must always remain more or less of a mystery to their fellows. In ancient times, and perhaps in some countries at the present day, he would have been accepted as a seer; in his own age and country the question was rather whether he

should be classed with visionaries or with lunatics. A visionary he certainly was, and few will believe either that his visions had any objective reality, or that he himself intended them to be received merely as symbols. "You can see what I do, if you choose," he said to his friends. He thus confused fancy with fact; unquestionably, therefore, he laboured under delusions. But delusions do not necessarily amount to insanity, and, however Blake erred in form, it may be doubted whether in essentials he was not nearer the truth than most so-called poets and artists. Every poet and artist worthy of the name will confess that his productions, when really good for anything, are the suggestion of a power external to himself, of an influence which he may to a certain extent guide, but cannot originate or summon up at his will; and in the absence of which he is helpless. In personifying this influence as the Muse, or howsoever he may prefer to describe it, such an one is usually fully aware that, in obedience to a law of the human mind, he is bestowing personality and visibility upon what is actually invisible and impersonal, but not on that account unreal. Some there are, however, whose perceptions are so lively, or their power of dealing with abstractions so limited, that the mental influences of which they are conscious appear to them in the light of personalities. Such was Blake, and the peculiarity in him was probably closely connected with the childlike disposition which rendered him so amiable as a man. As a child it naturally never occurred to him to question the reality of his visions, and he grew up without acquiring the critical habit of mind which would have led him to do so. With him "the vision splendid" did *not*

> Die away,
> And fade into the light of common day.

Such a state of mind is quite compatible with sanity. The question is not whether the person

> Gives to airy nothings
> A local habitation and a name,

but whether he allows his conduct to be actuated by them to the extent of inverting the rules of right and wrong, wasting his substance, or becoming offensive to others or dangerous to himself. It is even possible to travel far in this direction without arriving at the confines of insanity.

Prince Polignac brought the monarchy of the Restoration to ruin in deference to imaginary revelations from the Virgin Mary, yet no court of law would ever have placed him under restraint. With Blake not the faintest suggestion of such a thing is possible. Except for one or two incidents, related upon doubtful authority, he appears throughout his life in the light of an exemplary citizen, and in his unselfishness and unworldliness contrasts with his Sadducæan neighbours in a way that forbids us to call him mentally diseased, though he may have been mentally warped. The value of his mystical utterances is quite another question. The occasional splendour of the poetry in which they are couched will not be disputed, any more than their general confusion and obscurity. Commentators have striven hard to elicit the sunbeam from the cucumber ; we pass no judgment on their efforts, further than may seem to be implied in the observation that in our opinion the chief mission of Blake's mystical poetry was to be the vehicle of his finest and most characteristic art. His ideas, many profound and worthy of close attention, may, we think, be more advantageously collected from his prose aphorisms and the fragments of his conversation ; and in this respect he is by no means singular. The one great achievement which unquestionably entitles him to the distinction of an inspired man, is to have produced in boyhood, without set purpose or any clear consciousness of what he was doing, lyrics recalling the golden prime of English poetry, and instinct with a music to which, since Chatterton was no more, no contemporary save Burns was capable of making the slightest approach. It is true that reaction against artifice and conventionality was in the air of the time, and was already announced by evident symptoms. To compare, however, the highly creditable efforts in this direction of even such poets as Cowper and Mickle with the achievements of this stripling is to become sensible at once of the difference between talent and inspiration.

Blake's gifts and shortcomings as an artist are sufficiently revealed by the examples of his work which accompany this essay. It need merely be remarked here that, apart from the great army of artists of genius who move on recognised lines, transmitting the succession from the age of Zeuxis and Phidias to our own, there is, as it were, a parallel column skirting it on the by-roads of art ; and that at certain periods of Art's history the genius which has forsaken the more conspicuous of her

manifestations has seemed to take refuge with etchers, or designers, or delineators of the life of the people. It has frequently happened of late that men whose work was chiefly done for books and periodicals, and who during their lives were scarcely regarded as artists at all, have upon their deaths been deservedly exalted to very high places. Blake is perhaps the most striking and remarkable example of this class.

Blake's peculiarities as a man, and the anecdotes of which he became the subject, secured him earlier attention as artist and poet than his works would have obtained on their own account. Not long after his death he was made (1830) the subject of one of Allan Cunningham's *Lives of British Painters*, in the main a fair and impartial biography, rather in advance of than behind its time. Cunningham, however, possessed no sort of spiritual kinship with Blake, who found his first really congenial commentator in a veteran philosopher, still happily spared to us, Dr. James Garth Wilkinson, who in 1839, the year of the first collected edition of Shelley's poems, republished *Songs of Innocence and Experience* with an anonymous preface claiming for Blake something like his proper position as a lyric poet, and accompanied by judicious remarks upon his paintings. Dr. Wilkinson would probably have expressed himself still more decidedly if he had written a few years later, but the movement towards the exaltation of the more spiritual aspects of English poetry as typified in Wordsworth and Shelley was as yet but incipient, and the stars of Tennyson and Browning were hardly above the horizon. Little further seems to have been done for Blake, until, about 1855, the late Mr. Alexander Gilchrist began to write his biography, published in 1862, a labour of love and diligence which will never be superseded, especially since the revision it has received in the definitive edition of 1880, brought out by his widow. The value of Gilchrist's labours is greatly enhanced by the accompanying illustrations, which allow a fairly adequate conception to be formed of Blake's pictorial genius, by the reprint of much of his most characteristic literary work, and by the copious descriptions of his drawings by Mr. W. M. Rossetti and Mr. F. Shields. Since Gilchrist wrote, Mr. Swinburne (1868) has investigated Blake's thought with special reference to its Pantheistic tendency, and Messrs. Ellis and Yeats, in a most comprehensive work in three volumes (1891), including additional biographical particulars and copious

illustrations, which comprise the previously unpublished "Vala," have striven to present Blake's mysticism as a coherent system of thought. Valuable monographs are also prefixed to the editions of Blake's poems by Rossetti (1883) and Yeats (1893), and to the selection from his literary works by Mr. Housman (1893), this last perhaps on the whole, after Gilchrist's biography, the most desirable possession for the literary student of Blake. Of the numerous detached essays upon Blake the most important, perhaps, are that by the late Mr. Smetham, republished in his Essays, and in the second volume of Gilchrist's biography, and that by James Thomson, author of *The City of Dreadful Night*, appended to his *Shelley, a Poem* (1884).

It is exceedingly difficult to obtain a proper idea of Blake as an artist, from the extent to which his designs depend upon colouring, and the great inequality of this colouring, which is often not his own. In Mr. Gilchrist's opinion, the copy of *The Song of Los*, in the Print Room of the British Museum, and a volume of miscellaneous designs, in the same collection, represent him with adequate fairness; and these fortunately are public property. The finest specimens of his work seen by his biographer are apparently in the collection of the Earl of Crewe, and therefore not generally accessible. Those belonging to private collectors must of necessity be continually changing hands, and few students have the time or the opportunity to make the thorough investigation of them accomplished by Mr. Rossetti. Fortunately the illustrations in Gilchrist's biography, where the whole of the *Job* series is reissued, suffice to establish Blake's genius as a designer, even though destitute of the charm of colour. Mr. Bell Scott has executed effective etchings after him; Mr. Quaritch has republished the drawings for *Comus*; in 1876 the *Songs of Innocence and Experience* and the Prophetic Books up to *Los* were reprinted together, but only to the extent of a hundred copies, nor was the execution very satisfactory. It cannot be said that Messrs. Ellis and Yeats have entirely overcome the difficulties of reproduction; yet, perhaps, for those unable to obtain access to the copies tinted by the artist, or even to the uncoloured plates in the original edition, nothing so well displays the wilder and more weird aspects of his genius as the reprints in their third volume, especially those from *Jerusalem*.

Blake's character and works will long remain the subject of criticism

and speculation, for the world does not easily forgo its interest in what Goethe calls "problematic natures." By another famous saying of Goethe's he cannot profit, "He who has sufficed his own age has sufficed all ages," nor can he be reckoned among those who have been in advance of their age, except in those exquisite early songs which died away before the actual arrival of the better time. But it would not be too much to say of him that he revealed possibilities, both in poetry and painting, which without him we should hardly have suspected, and which remain an unexhausted seed-field of inspiration for his successors. It is labour lost to strive to make him transparent, but even where he is most opaque

> Sparks spring out of the ground,
> Like golden sand scattered upon the darkness.

Nor is the general tendency of art towards a world of purity, harmony, and joy unrepresented in him; sometimes this even seems the conclusion to which all else is merely subservient, as in the series of illustrations to Job, the ideal representation of his own history.

Sweeping the Parlour in the Interpreter's House.

INDEX

"America," 29, 38, 40, 52
"Appeal to the Public," 52
Aspland, Mr. 62

"Babylonian Woman, The" 52
Bain, Thomas 29
"Bard, The" 56
Basire, James 8
Blair's *Grave*, Illustrations to 49, 51, 52, 72
Blake, Catherine 10, 18, 20, 29, 66, 70
Blake, James 7, 8, 16
Blake, John 8
Blake, Robert 8, 17, 18
Blake, William; his birth and parentage, 7; sent to Pars School, 8; apprenticed to Basire, 9; marries Catherine Boucher, 10; settles in Poland Street, 18; removes to Lambeth, 28; his sojourn at Felpham and intercourse with Hayley, 47; returns to London, 49; his friendship with Linnell and Varley, 59, 60; his death, 72
Bognor, 41
"Book of Ahaniah, The" 29
Boucher, Catherine see Blake, Catherine
British Museum, 22, 62, 77
Butts, Thomas 29, 43, 44, 52, 61, 62

Calvert, Edward 66
"Canterbury Pilgrims, The" 52, 56
Carey, William 58
Cennini, Cennino 73
"Christ in the Sepulchre," 54
"Comus," 92
Cowper, William 41, 43, 44, 75
Crewe, Earl of 38, 46, 62, 77
Cromek, Robert 49, 51, 52
Cumberland, George 59
Cunningham, Allan 30, 56, 76

Dante, Illustrations to 69, 70
"Death on the Pale Horse," 58
Descriptive Catalogue by Blake, 52
Deville, 38

Eartham, 41
"Edward III.," 13, 31
Ellis and Yeats, Messrs., 8, 18, 30, 32, 33, 35, 38, 45, 51, 54, 70, 76, 77
"Europe," 31
"Everlasting Gospel, The" 33

Felpham, 27, 41, 42, 44, 45, 48
Finch, G. O. 66
Flaxman, 15, 28, 41, 42, 59, 69
Fuseli, 27, 44, 59

"Gates of Paradise, The" 29, 30, 52
Gilchrist, Alexander, 9, 14, 16, 19, 27, 29, 31, 38, 46, 49, 51, 52, 54, 60—62, 65, 66, 68, 73, 76
Godwin, William 27
Gray, Illustrations to works of 62

Hamilton, Duke of 62
Hayley, William 18, 42—44, 49
Holcroft, 27
Housman, 48, 77

"Jacob's Dream," 52
"Jerusalem," 42, 45, 46, 48
Job, Illustrations to the Book of 62, 64, 70, 77, 78
Johnson (publisher), 27, 44
"Joseph of Arimathæa," 9

Lamb, Charles 20, 51
Lawrence, Sir Thomas 21, 59
Linnell, John 30, 59, 60, 62, 64, 69, 72, 73
"Los, The Song of" 29

Malkin, 9, 52
"Marriage of Heaven and Hell, The" 29, 36
Matthews, 15
"Milton," 46, 48, 49
"Morning," 9

"Nelson guiding Leviathan," 56

O'Neil, 8
Ossian, 31

Paine, Tom 27
Palmer, Samuel 57, 66, 68
Paradise Lost, Illustrations for 62
Parker, Robert 16, 17
Pars, William 8
"Penance of Jane Shore," 9
Phillips, Thomas 49
Piroli, 28
"Pitt guiding Behemoth," 56
"Poetical Sketches," 10, 13, 16, 19, 43
"Prophecies of America," 37
"Proverbs of Hell," 36

Reynolds, Sir Joshua 57, 59
Richmond, George 66
Robinson, Crabb 32, 51, 59, 68–70
Rossetti, Dante 38
Rossetti, William, 17, 20, 33, 38, 51, 61, 62, 65, 70, 76, 77
Ryland, William, 8

"Samson," 31
"Satan calling up his Legions," 56
Schiavonetti, 49, 51
Shields, Frederick 29, 76
"Simple, David" 16
Smetham, 77
Smith, J. T., 16
"Songs of Experience," 15, 20, 21, 23–25, 27, 35, 76, 77
"Songs of Innocence," 15, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 35, 43, 76, 77
Stothard, Thomas 16, 17, 51, 54, 59
Strange, J. C. 62
Swinburne, A. C. 30, 47, 56, 76

Tatham, 70, 71, 72
"Thel, The Book of" 29, 31, 33, 36, 40, 47
Thomson, James 77
Thornton, Dr. 65
"Tiriel," 30

"Urizen," 29, 43

"Vala," 29, 77
Varley, John 56, 60
"Vision of the Daughters of Albion," 29, 37

Whitman, Walt 31
Wilkinson, J. Garth 76
Wollstonecraft, Mary 27
Woollett, 54

Young's *Night Thoughts*, Illustrations to 29

De Vigne. fecit

Psyche.

THE RENAISSANCE OF SCULPTURE IN BELGIUM

OLIVER [illegible]
Author of

LONDON
SEELEY AND CO. LIMITED, ESSEX STREET, STRAND
NEW YORK, MACMILLAN AND CO.
1895

THE RENAISSANCE OF SCULPTURE IN BELGIUM

By

OLIVIER GEORGES DESTRÉE

Author of "Les Pré-Raphaélites," "Notes sur l'Art Décoratif," "La Peinture en Angleterre," &c.

LONDON
SEELEY AND CO. LIMITED, ESSEX STREET, STRAND
NEW YORK, MACMILLAN AND CO.
1895

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATES

PAGE

Psyche. Ivory Bust. By J. P. De Vigne . . . . . *Frontispiece*

The Robber of the Eagle's Nests. By Jef Lambeaux . . . . . *to face* 42

Bas-relief commemorative of the foundation of the Solvay Institute. By Julien Dillens . . . . . ,, ,, 46

Industry. Part of an alto-rilievo. By Constantin Meunier . . . . . ,, ,, 70

ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

Immortality. Sepulchral figure. By P. de Vigne 27

Pax Vobiscum. Bronze bust. By C. Van der Stappen 28

The Builders of Cities. Group in plaster. By C. Van der Stappen 30

Bust of the Comtesse de Mérode. By T. Vinçotte 31

Group for the Pediment of the Antwerp Museum. By T. Vinçotte 32

Bronze Statue of Cavelier de la Salle, at Chicago. By Jacques de Lalaing . . . 33

Statue on the Monument at Evere to the English who fell at Waterloo. By acques de Lalaing 35

The Merry Song. By Jef Lambeaux 41

Cartoon for the bas-relief of the Passions of Humanity. By Jef Lambeaux . . 45

Medallion commemorative of the Godefroy gift to the town of Brussels. By J. Dillens 47

PAGE

Sepulchral Figure. By J. Dillens 48
Mother and Child. Group in plaster. By Jules Lagaë 50
Expiation. Bronze Group. By Jules Lagaë 51
The Kiss. By Jules Lagaë 52
Happy. Marble Bust. By Victor Rousseau 58
Adolescents. By Jean Marie Gaspar 60
The Puddler. Bronze Statue. By C. Meunier 65
The Glebe. Sketch in bas-relief. By C. Meunier 68
Ivory Head of a Child. By Jules Lagaë 73
Minerva. Bust in ivory and bronze. By J. Dillens 74
Allegretto. By J. Dillens 76

The author and publishers desire to thank the artists and photographers, who have given permission for reproductions of their works.

List of books to which the writer has been indebted : *Mémoires sur la Sculpture aux Pays Bas pendant les XVII et XVIII siècles*, by the Chev. Edmond Marchal. Hayen ; Brussels, 1877. *La Sculpture et les chefs-d'œuvre de l'orfèvrerie Belge*, by the same. Hayen ; Brussels, 1895. *Histoire de la Sculpture*, by G. J. Dodd. Patria Belgica (Part III.) *La Dinanderie*, by Alex. Pinchard. Patria Belgica. (Part III.) *Cinquante ans de Liberté*, by Camille Lemonier. Weysenbruck ; Brussels. *Les Artistes Belges Contemporains*, by E. L. de Taye. Castaigne ; Brussels. Biographical notices by Messrs. Jules Destrée, Eugène Demolder, and E. Verhaerin.

This monograph has been translated from the French by Miss Florence Simmonds.

THE RENAISSANCE OF SCULPTURE IN BELGIUM

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF BELGIAN SCULPTURE FROM THE ELEVENTH CENTURY TO 1830.

"Car Flandre peut dormir, mais mourir jamais!"
—Charles de Coster, *Légende de Tiel Uylenspiegel.*

"Having eyes, they see not, and having ears, they hear not." The Scriptural phrase has a special application to those contemporary critics and thinkers who are never weary of lamenting the materialism, the want of artistic comprehension, which they declare to be the characteristics of our age. From the dawn of the century onwards, the decadence of art has been unceasingly bewailed; and yet, throughout the century, one glorious artist has succeeded another; undaunted by the scorn or indifference of their contemporaries, they have created a series of masterpieces, which some hundred years hence will entitle our epoch to rank as another Golden Age of art and poetry. It is true that individual arts had a more sumptuous development under the blue skies of Greece, or in the stately palaces of the Italian Renaissance. Greek sculpture will never be equalled, I believe, nor will any school of painting ever rival that of the Italians. But to judge of the greatness of any particular epoch in the history of art, we must not take some specialised manifestation of that art. We must examine its knowledge and its activity in the aggregate; and thus considered, this nineteenth century of ours is

singularly splendid, complete and luminous—grand enough, inspired enough, in all its multiple aspects, to bear comparison with the great eras of Phidias and of Michelangelo. The most striking characteristic of this century, perhaps, has been the diffusion of art and culture throughout all the great countries of Europe. Greece, at the zenith of the civilisation which has made her immortal, kept that civilisation jealously for herself; the Renaissance, wider and fuller in its workings, shone alike upon Italy, Spain, France, England, Germany, and the Netherlands; but the art of our own age has illuminated a vaster territory still; it has penetrated the mysterious immensity of Russia, it has invaded America. In France, in Germany, in England, in Italy, in Russia, poets and artists have appeared, not as isolated phenomena, but in battalions. France, who in the person of her great national poet takes the lead in the modern movement, and is the acknowledged depositary of its culture, was not content to produce Hugo, the greatest singer of modern times; she gave him as predecessors and followers a legion of glorious artists, among whom, to name but the greatest among the great, were poets such as Vigny, Lamartine, Musset, Gautier, Banville, Leconte de Lisle, and Baudelaire, and prose writers such as Châteaubriand, Balzac, Flaubert, Barbey d'Aurevilly, and Taine. Germany gave us Goethe, a star of the first magnitude; and, as though to permit her to compete with France, the lives of Schiller and of Klopstock were prolonged into the early years of this century. To these illustrious names must be added those of the romantic Uhland, and of the most tender and sensitive of German poets, Heinrich Heine. Italy was one of the first to participate in this revival; at the dawn of the century she gave the world that dazzling pleiad of poets, Alfieri, Monti, Giusti, Foscoli, and Leopardi. England, in her turn, has produced more great lyric singers than in any previous century; the very enumeration of their names, Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Landor, Swinburne, Browning, Tennyson, Arnold, and Rossetti, evokes the memory of strains that might well have sufficed for the poetry of a whole century. Nor was this all; Russia justly prides herself on the genius of Pouchkin, Gogal, Tutchew, and Lermontoff, while the name of Tolstoi, and his admirable works, have won a world-wide fame. In America, again, a whole school of bards compete with those of the mother-country.

need only cite the typical names of Poe, Longfellow, and Walt Whitman. When we consider that this dazzling band of immortals, and the colossal sum of their joint creations, represent but a part of the poetry of this century ; when we recall the majestic figures of Beethoven, Wagner, Schumann, the protagonists of German music in our epoch, and remember that musicians, only less brilliant than these, have flourished in Italy, in France, in Belgium, in Denmark, and in Russia ; when, turning to France once more, we pass in review her painters of the beginning of the century, Prudhon, David, Ingres, Delacroix, and the Romantics, Corot, Millet, and the school of Barbizon ; when in Belgium we find the school of Antwerp, with Leys and De Braekeleer, and in England, Turner, Blake, Crome, Constable, and the idealists known as the Pre-Raphaelites, can we feel anything short of admiring wonder for the achievements of an age which has been too long decried ?

In this extraordinary outburst of modern art, sculpture alone seemed to have no share. Great personalities had arisen, who produced notable works ; but neither Canova in Italy, Carpeaux, Pradier, nor Barye in France, Thorwaldsen in Denmark, nor Flaxman in England, created any school ; and modern sculpture appeared to have neither definite tendency, nor strongly marked ideal. But during the second half of the century a sudden revival took place in Belgium, where sculpture has always been, as it were, a native art : and this movement has gradually taken form and developed, resulting in that brilliant Renaissance of sculpture which I am about to analyse, in the hope that it may win appreciation from the English public. Before, however, I embark on this examination of contemporary sculpture in Belgium, determining its general features and tendencies, I should like to explain why this Renaissance, the coping-stone of the art-fabric of the nineteenth century, should have manifested itself in Belgium rather than in any other country. To do this, I must give, not a history of sculpture in the Netherlands, which, however succinct, would take us too far afield,[1] and would be beyond the scope of my present undertaking, but a brief

[1] This history has in fact been written already, and most exhaustively, by the Chevalier E. Marchal, Secretary of the *Académie de Belgique*. See his *Mémoire sur la Sculpture aux Pays Bas*. Brussels, 1877.

summary of that history, in which I shall try to show that from the beginning of the twelfth century, sculpture has been cultivated among us with no less success and continuity than painting, and that not only sculptors, but schools of sculpture, have followed one another in regular succession from the twelfth century to the present day. The history of painting in the Netherlands is familiar to every lover of art, but that of its sculpture is far more obscure. The works of our sculptors have been either scattered throughout the four quarters of Europe, or hidden in the churches of obscure little Walloon or Flemish villages unknown to Murray and Baedeker, which even tourists who are interested in art pass by without any suspicion of the masterpieces they conceal. But as the student examines the sculpture of the Netherlands in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, he is more and more struck by its development and its importance ; he is gradually led to understand how contemporary Belgian sculptors, guided by one or two powerful individualities, have been able to bring about so brilliant a Renaissance. These men appear as the direct heirs and true posterity of those famous Walloon and Flemish artists for whose services foreign Courts competed in the fifteenth century, and who bequeathed to their descendants—descendants affiliated to them through the Flemish sculptors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—together with the craft itself, much of that technical mastery which comes from immemorial practice. This intuitive power seems in some measure to result from the mere fact of a long artistic lineage, and of birth in a country where an art has been uninterruptedly practised.

Let us therefore make a hasty survey of the development of sculpture in the Netherlands. And, first, it is important to note the division of the country into two regions, inhabited by two perfectly distinct races. The language, the character, the manners, and the artistic ideals of these two races differ essentially. The North (Flanders, the province of Antwerp, Limburg, and North Brabant) is the home of the Fleming, pious, laborious, slow, yet energetic, his character showing the influence of his German neighbours ; in the south (Hainault, Namur, Liège, and Luxembourg), we find the Walloon, the friend of the Frenchman, whose language he speaks. He is of a more lively race, living under brighter skies and in a more varied landscape, a race that has the

cheerful character of its surroundings, whose sons are gay and light-hearted, graceful dreamers, whose art is founded on the charming caprices of their own imaginations, rather than on a patient and inflexible study of Nature. Of the two, the Flemings boast a more glorious past in the history of art, and in painting and sculpture more especially, the Flemings have produced greater and more famous masters. But the Walloons have played no inconsiderable part in the same history, and we must remember that it was by them and among them that art first prospered. It was in the Walloon abbeys that it was most successfully practised in the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries. Many of these abbeys were, in fact, academies, where painting, and sculpture in wood, stone, gold, silver, and bronze were systematically taught. I may instance the abbey of Lobbes, directed in the eleventh century by the monk Foulques, a famous carver in wood and stone, that of Vaulsort, in the province of Namur, that of Stavelot, directed by Poppon, who executed his own monument in the church of his abbey, and, finally, that of St. Trond, one of the most famous schools of the eleventh century.

The most important monuments of the eleventh century are therefore to be found in the Walloon provinces. These are the porch of the College of St. Gertrude at Nivelles, sculptured with the history of Samson, and the porch of the beautiful cathedral at Tournai known as the Porte Mantille. The bas-reliefs on the weather-stained and lichen-covered gray stones of this doorway are the first memorable creations of our native sculpture ; they have a rude poetry which the magic patina laid on them by time has but enhanced, softening their characteristic harshness and barbaric extravagance.

The beginning of the twelfth century is marked by works of more importance, which show a great technical advance on the above. These are the metal fonts cast by the Dinantais, Lambert Patras, in 1112, for Hellin, canon of the cathedral of Liège. They are of copper, decorated in relief with scenes from the lives of St. John the Baptist, St. Peter, and St. John the Evangelist. I know of no work of the kind more fascinating. They recall the reliefs executed a little later in Italy by Niccola Pisano, at the outset of his career. Lambert Patras' work, indeed, is characterised by a naïve grace, a sense of beauty remarkable for its rejection of conventional forms, and a perfection of composition truly

astonishing when we remember the date of its execution—qualities, in fact, which proclaim the humble metal worker of Dinant an artist far in advance of his epoch. Other fonts, cast for the church of Tirlemont, and now in the Royal Museum of the Parc du Cinquantenaire at Brussels, are of the same period, but are far inferior as works of art. The twelfth century was, indeed, an age of goldsmiths and workers in metal, rather than of sculptors in the modern sense. After Lambert Patras' fonts, the most famous and the most justly admired example of this initial period of sculpture is a piece of goldsmiths' work, the cover of an Evangelium, executed by Friar Hugues, a monk of the Abbey of Oignies. It has figured several times in art exhibitions, and has always excited the warmest admiration.

From the ninth to the twelfth century, sculpture, as might be shown by a mere enumeration of those who practised it, was purely ecclesiastical in character. It was taught and executed in monasteries, and the majority of these monasteries, as also the greater number of the works still extant which they produced, are to be found in the Walloon provinces. These works are nearly all designed for use in worship, and are to be found for the most part in churches of the Romanesque or Romano-Byzantine type. In the twelfth century, architecture adopted a new form ; art, in its turn, emerged from the monastery and threw off its dogmatic formulæ, retaining, nevertheless, its religious character, and consecrating its first efforts to religion. As M. Dodd has pointed out, Christian art then attained the most glorious stage of its faith.[1] It turned to the study of nature, and thus began its progress towards the apogee it reached in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The development of the communes gave a great impetus to this emancipation of sculpture from ecclesiastical control. The markets, belfries, guild-halls, and town-halls which rose on every side, from the thirteenth to the end of the sixteenth century, afforded a magnificent field for the fancy of those sculptors to whom their decoration was entrusted. Religious architecture, losing something of its grandeur and simplicity from the architectonic point of view, in passing from the Romanesque to the Gothic style, took on a new importance from the sculptural side, and began to rival the monuments of civil architecture in splendour and

[1] Dodd, *Histoire de la Sculpture. Patria Belgica*, Part iii.

magnificence. Throughout the north those vast prayers in stone, fit symbols of the age's ardent faith, the great Gothic cathedrals, soared heavenward. And sculptors had to find, and found with ease, apparently, a myriad motives derived from a study of nature for the ornamentation of the capitals, windows, doors, pinnacles, and gables of these huge buildings.

It would be beyond the scope of our present study to examine, even in the briefest and most summary fashion, the achievements of Netherlandish sculpture throughout the Gothic period. The student of an exhaustive work on the subject, such as M. Marchal's recent book,[1] is amazed at the prodigious activity of this epoch. A great number of the masterpieces produced were long unknown to the public and to artists, buried as they were in obscure Belgian villages. It is only of late, thanks to recent photographs and the plaster reproductions to be found in our museums, that we have begun to realise the importance and merit of our early sculpture. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries costly carved reliquaries began to appear, miniature churches, which the goldsmith-sculptors copied from the cathedrals, and covered with the same profusion of ornament they found on these—spires, arches, trefoils, belfries, pinnacles and rose-windows. A reredos over the altar also became usual in these two centuries, and churches were adorned with memorial brasses, and monuments dedicated to deceased princes, nobles, and ecclesiasts. The school most renowned for the production of such memorials in the early part of the fourteenth century was that of Tournai, of which Waagen speaks with the utmost enthusiasm, declaring that "in their reproduction of Nature, at once faithful and discriminating, the pre-eminence of these artists among contemporary European sculptors was as unquestionable as that of the Van Eycks among painters a little later."

At about the same period, Dinant became famous as the home of those workers in copper, whose productions were known as *dinanderie*, or *dinanterie*, from the town in which they had established themselves. This art, practised as we have already seen, by Lambert Patras in the twelfth century, had developed to such an extent that the

[1] *La Sculpture et les chefs d'œuvre de l'Orfèvrerie belge.* Brussels. Printed by the *Académie de Belgique.*

copper-founders, or *copères*, as they were called, had by their trade with neighbouring countries, raised their town, of which they themselves formed one-third of the population, to the position of the third city in the state. Their own province soon became too restricted a field for their activity, and they established colonies and workshops in many Belgian towns, notably at Louvain, St. Trond, Mechlin and Brussels.

Important as these schools of Tournai and Dinant undoubtedly were, I must pass them over to come to the school of Burgundy, and its famous head, Nicolas (in Flemish, Claus) Sluter, justly esteemed the greatest sculptor of his age. The rise of this school of Flemish sculptors in Burgundy is a familiar fact to all students of art history. The marriage of Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, with the Countess Margaret, heiress of Flanders, attracted many Flemish artists to his court from Dinant, Hainault, Flanders, and Brabant. The most remarkable of them all, and one of the earliest, was this Claus Sluter. The Duke fortunately appreciated him at his just value ; for him Sluter executed the magnificent monument at Dijon, known as the *Well of Moses*, a statue of John the Baptist for the church of St. Etienne at Dijon, and finally, his masterpiece, the splendid tomb of Philip the Bold in the Carthusian church. Contemporary with Sluter at Dijon was Jacques de la Baerse, architect and wood-carver, a native of Termonde, who collaborated with the former, executing the architectural part of Philip the Bold's monument, and also two reredoses for the Duke, the shutters of which were painted by Broederlam ; both are now in the Dijon Museum. Sluter had another collaborator in his work for the Duke's tomb, his nephew, Nicholas van de Werve, who worked under him so constantly that it is difficult to assign to each his share in the execution of the tomb. A more important matter for us is the fact that this monument, a recumbent figure in white marble on a vast sarcophagus, guarded by two angels who kneel in prayer at the head [1] is the most important work of sculpture of the late fourteenth century. Far in advance of its time, it is, indeed, completely modern in conception and execution. I have compared

[1] The four sides of the tomb are surrounded by a gallery, formed of pointed arches, surmounted by pierced canopies of extraordinary richness and delicacy of execution. Forty statuettes of weeping monks and mourning squires people these miniature vaults. See Dodd, *op. cit.*

Lambert Patras to Niccola Pisano; Sluter and Van de Werve may be not inaptly compared to Donatello. The materials they had to work upon were less perfect than those the Florentine sculptor found ready to his hand; but like the Italian, the two Flemish sculptors fixed and determined the modern forms of sculpture, and relying solely on nature, and on the inspiration of their own genius, they created types from which art might diverge in after times, but which it could never hope to surpass in beauty and in perfection.

We now come to the golden age of Belgian sculpture, and it is hard to say which of the two centuries, the fifteenth or the sixteenth, produced the greater number of masterpieces. Those of the sixteenth century have a wider celebrity, for many of them found homes in artistic centres more frequented than those in which earlier works were preserved. But can it be truly said that they were more beautiful than those reredoses of carved wood which Belgium still preserves in obscure villages? These works, enriched with hundreds of figures, instinct with passionate fervour and piety, are still to be seen in the churches of Boendael and Auderghem, near Brussels, and of Herenthals, Léau, and Hackendover in Brabant, to mention only the most famous. It was during this fifteenth century, too, that the town-halls of Bruges, Brussels, Ghent, and Louvain were built, and that sculpture, henceforth the sister art of architecture, peopled the niches of their façades with innumerable statues.

If, as regards its sculpture, the fifteenth century may be called the age *par excellence* of the reredos and the town-hall, the sixteenth century may be said in like manner to be the age of princely monuments. The supreme works of the sculptors of the Flemish Renaissance were tombs. The Bruxellois, Pierre de Becker, raised the first of these great monuments in 1502. This was the graceful and charming memorial of Mary of Burgundy, in a chapel of the Church of Notre Dame at Bruges, the companion monument to which, the tomb of Charles the Bold, was executed some twenty years later, by Jacques Jonghelinckx, of Antwerp, by command of Philip II. Another Anversois, the famous Corneille Floris, surnamed De Vriendt, was the sculptor of the mausoleum of Christian II., King of Denmark, in the cathedral of Roskilde, and of the tomb of Gustavus Vasa, erected at Upsala in 1560. Fine as these

two works are, they are by no means his masterpieces. He executed some religious monuments which give him a still higher place as sculptor and as architect. One of these is the rich and dignified rood-screen of Tournai cathedral, erected in place of the one destroyed by the Iconoclasts in 1566 ; the other, a more graceful, a more fascinating work, his masterpiece indeed, is admired by all artists as the most perfect production of this particular *genre*. It is the shrine in the church of Léau, of which every museum of sculpture now possesses either a photograph, or a plaster model.

After Pierre de Becker, Jonghelinckx and Corneille Floris, Louis van Boghen and Conrad Meyt may be mentioned, the one as architect, the other as sculptor. Their title to fame rests on the admirable tombs they executed in the sumptuous Gothic church of Brou at Bourg-en-Bresse, near Lyons. The church was built by Louis van Boghen of Brussels for Margaret of Austria. It is the last remarkable monument of the Gothic style, and the whole of the interior decoration, the painted glass, the stalls, the tombs, were the work of Flemish artists. Recent research seems to prove this master sculptor, Conrad Meyt, a native of Worms. This is quite possible, but none the less may we account him a Flemish artist, as he was always accounted in his own times. Dürer, who often mentions him, calls him "the prince of Flemish sculptors," and in Italy he was known as Corrado Fiamingo. Whatever his birthplace, his art was purely Flemish, and the tombs of Philibert II., Duke of Savoy, Margaret of Bourbon, and Margaret of Austria, all three masterpieces of grace, elegance, and nobility, rank among the finest works of sculpture of the period.

But even more beautiful than these is the magnificent tomb which Thorwaldsen pronounced the masterpiece of the *genre*, the monument to the Emperor Maximilian, by Alexander Colyns of Mechlin, in the church of Sainte Croix at Innsbrück. Never, indeed, was a nobler or more stately memorial raised to a great sovereign than this, with its proud retinue of twenty-three colossal bronze kings and queens. The tomb is placed in the middle of the church ; it consists of a massive square sarcophagus of black marble, upon which the Emperor kneels, his hands clasped in prayer. He wears the imperial mantle and diadem. At the four corners of the monument Colyns has placed statues of the

four theological virtues; the tomb is unquestionably a grand and impressive conception, and the statues are at once simple and beautiful. But the master's genius did not find its most triumphant expression here. For this we must turn to the twenty-four bas-reliefs on the sides of the sarcophagus, representing the most important scenes in Maximilian's life. No sculptor, before or since, has shown such a mastery of the composition of a bas-relief, or such unerring skill in its execution. Never were battles, sieges, armies in motion, rendered in stone with such amazing verve and impetuosity. The most animated of the combats painted by Paolo Uccello, so famous for his perspective, have neither the irresistible movement, the learned modelling, nor the happy arrangement of the various planes displayed in Colyns's reliefs of the two Battles of Guinegate. These bas-reliefs, to which the sculptor devoted eight years of his life, are not only admirable in their knowledge of treatment, in their triumph over material, in their scientific composition, and harmonious arrangement. They are, above all, remarkable as inventions, as essays in selection of scene and subject. The Flemish sculptor sets a whole world, the world of the Middle Ages, in array, and makes it defile before us, and it is this final quality, added to all the rest, which makes his work, to my mind, the most important achievement of Flemish sculpture in the sixteenth century.

The art of the sixteenth century was not confined to such memorials. One of the most remarkable works of the period was the famous fireplace of the Franc de Bruges, executed by Guyot de Beaugrant and Lancelot Blondeel in collaboration. The former carved all the black and white marble, while the latter is credited with the design.

In the Walloon provinces also sculpture took on a new splendour. A Montois sculptor, Jacques du Broeucq, on whom Charles V. conferred the title of master-artist to the Emperor, carved the rood-screen of the church of Sainte Waudru at Mons; it was, unfortunately, taken to pieces afterwards, and the various parts are now divided among several chapels. We can no longer judge of the work as a whole, but according to the chroniclers of the period it was considered equal to the finest French work; a saying which has often been quoted places it in the same category: "the doors of Rheims, the nave of Amiens, the choir of Beauvais, and the doxal (or rood-screen) of Mons." Jacques du

Broeucq gathered round him a whole school of young sculptors, and had the signal honour of counting among his disciples the famous Giovanni da Bologna, who worked in his atelier up to his twentieth year. We are so accustomed to look upon the famous author of the *Mercury* and the *Rape of the Sabines* as an Italian artist, that I forbear to do more than mention his origin in passing.

The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had been the golden age of sculpture in the Netherlands. Not only do we find municipal buildings and cathedrals arising throughout Belgium, not only do we see these cathedrals adorned with reredos, tabernacle, rood-screen and monument by native artists, but we hear of these same artists in all the great foreign centres. Prosper Mérimée, in his *Notes d'Auvergne* says that Flemish artists were employed throughout France at this period on the ornamentation of churches. We have seen them so employed at Dijon, Rouen and Brou, and also in Germany, Bohemia, Denmark, and even so far afield as Sweden. We trace them in Spain: at Toledo, where Anequin des Egas constructed the rich façade of the cathedral, known as the *Façade of the Lions;* at Burgos, where Philip of Burgundy built that dizzy cupola, for which Théophile Gautier expressed so strong an admiration; at Seville, where two Flemish artists made the famous triangular candelabrum of the cathedral; at Valladolid, at Valencia, and even at Granada, where there are two Flemish bas-reliefs in the cathedral, representing the defeat and conversion of the Moors.

It was impossible that a manifestation of such brilliance should be long sustained. Every great period of artistic activity has been succeeded by one of decadence. This decadence, however, did not proclaim itself at once, and the seventeenth century witnessed the rise of a long series of artists, who gave an important development to wood-carving, as we see by the number of confessionals and pulpits produced at this period. The most generally admired works in this *genre* are the confessionals in the church of St. Jacques at Antwerp, and at Brussels, and the pulpit in the church of Ste. Gudule, carved by Henri François Verbruggen.

In these works, however, as in nearly all others of the seventeenth century, we note a gradual dying down of that sacred fire which burnt in the veins of the fifteenth and sixteenth century sculptors. One man

dominated the whole art of the age from the height of his commanding genius—Rubens, a master who possessed every gift that makes for pre-eminence in painting, but whose sculpturesque perceptions were less unerring. His art is the triumph of colour, and following his natural predilections, he encouraged by his powerful influence the tendency to exalt *colour* in every form of art, even to the detriment of *line*, the quality so indispensable in sculpture. A striking exemplification of this influence is to be found in the works of Luc Faidherbe, the Malinois sculptor, who decorated all the churches built in the "Jesuit style," a style inspired by Rubens, and invented by members of the Society of Jesus of this period. His statues have that theatrical and pompous character to which the great Antwerp painter inclined, and which he himself transfigured by the splendour of his colour. They are altogether lacking in feeling, and have little merit beyond their decorative quality, and their fitness for the buildings for which they were designed.

In this decorative *genre*, other Belgian artists of the period produced works of greater merit than those of Luc Faidherbe and his numerous scholars, and were largely employed on fountains, statues, and groups of figures at Marly, and Trianon, and in the gardens of the palace of Versailles, where the brothers Margy executed the much-admired Fountain of Latona.

Before the decadence finally declared itself, Flemish sculpture blazed out into a last burst of radiance in the person of François Duquesnoy (born at Brussels in 1594, died at Leghorn in 1642). The ivories he carved at the beginning of his career secured him the patronage of the Archduke Albert, to whose notice he was recommended by Rubens. The Duke gave him the means of studying in Italy, where his passion for the antique found expression in the numerous copies he made of classic remains, which collectors still prize as of the highest value. But his natural gifts soon sought out original channels. His education completed, he revealed himself in works which have won universal fame. No artist has equalled him in the rendering of those heads of chubby, healthy, laughing children so frequent in his early compositions. The admiration they excited, and the success they obtained made many envious of the artist, who was known in Rome as Il Fiamingo. Secure, however, in the friendship of Poussin, with whom he lived for some time, and

in the protection of Cardinal Colonna, he was commissioned by Pope Urban VII. to carry out the ornamentation of the bronze baldacchino erected by the Pontiff over the high altar of St. Peter's : the main features of which are groups of children amongst garlands of foliage. This work, the motives of which are taken from Greek mythology (a source, I think, from which Duquesnoy was one of the first among Flemish artists to borrow), greatly increased the master's prestige ; but his detractors, eager to entangle him as it were in his own success, loudly asserted that if he excelled in the sculpture of children, this excellence marked the limits of his art, and that he was incapable of producing a great and serious work. He answered them by carving his *St. Susanna*, for the church of Loretto, and shortly afterwards, his colossal statue of *St. Andrew*, for St. Peter's, which established his claim to immortality. Little as we incline to the opinion of his detractors, and much as we appreciate his religious sculpture, we must confess a preference for his Cupids, children, and genii, and his mythological groups, all so instinct with the expression of his own graceful, playful, and charming individuality. It is to these he owes an original and distinguished place in the history of art.

Duquesnoy is the connecting link between early and modern sculpture. He seems nearer to us than he really is ; but this illusion is a result of the great popularity enjoyed by the classic subjects he affected towards the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. This revival of classicism, due partly to the discovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii, partly to the creation of academies, partly to the influence of David, no inconsiderable factor for a time, was of immense benefit to Belgian sculpture, languishing in the conventional style introduced by Luc Faidherbe and the school of Mechlin. To it we owe the appearance of the graceful Flemish sculptor, Gilles Lambert Godecharles, the one original artist who flourished in Belgium at this period. Godecharles cannot be called a great master ; but he was a tender and charming artist. His works in the Brussels Museum, *Charity* and the *Bather*, are very pleasing, and full of a delicate sentiment. His most important undertaking, the bas-relief of *Justice* on the pediment of the national palace, was a task beyond his powers ; his group of children, very effectively placed among the straight, regular alleys of

the Park at Brussels, is altogether more satisfactory. I may also call attention to a charming bust by him in the sculpture gallery of the old museum at Brussels. It is the head of a woman, her hair dressed in Grecian fashion, whose smiling face has much sweetness and distinction.

The art of Godecharles brings us to our own century, and we find little worthy of record during its first years, the incubatory period of modern Belgian sculpture. The classic revival, valuable as it was in principle, had had but slight practical results. The Greco-Roman statues of the decadence had become the chosen models in academies, rather than the masterpieces of the golden age, and the best-known sculptors of the day were content to imitate and reproduce them as exactly as possible. The spirit of antique sculpture was as completely lacking in their creations, as was the comprehension of the wonders of Greek art in the minds of academic professors and official sculptors. The tunic which covered the marble fell in correct folds, carefully spaced and arranged ; the peplum was minutely copied from that of some statue of the best period ; the sandals and the fibulæ, the urn, or the column on which the pensive figure leant—all were Greek, severely Greek. But the spirit of Greece had no part in the creation, and the statue, as a rule, had neither life nor originality, save, indeed, such as it sometimes acquired from a glaring display of bad taste.

The whole system was radically false and puerile, and it was impossible that any new and vigorous art should have been built upon it. This truth was borne in upon a little group of young Belgian sculptors about the year 1850. They were further persuaded that a return to antique art could only be vital, in so far as it was based upon a close and conscientious study of Nature. Their works were at first rejected by Salons and Exhibitions, and despised by the public. This, however, was far from shaking their artistic conviction. Gradually, they formed, not one, but several schools, and finally, they succeeded in reviving that great art which had slumbered in Belgium for two centuries.

I now propose to show who these artists were, what was the task they set themselves, what their characteristics and tendencies, and what they have actually achieved.

CHAPTER I

CONTEMPORARY BELGIAN SCULPTORS—TRANSITION PERIOD—THE "CLASSIC" SCULPTORS

EVERY revival, if exhaustively studied, will be found to have been slowly and gradually accomplished by successive stages. One generation of artists often fails to effect the transformation, to change the character and tendencies of an art, and infuse into it a new life, taking it out of the conventional groove, and setting it in the right road; directing it, in short, towards that ideal which has always been the same in its general lines, in all great artistic epochs. These successive phases, this gradual transformation, are to be found in the development of the Belgian revival of sculpture, and we shall note three distinct generations working to accomplish it.

We have seen how Belgian sculpture had declined at the beginning of the century, and what were the causes that contributed to this decline: a mistaken academic tradition, selecting and insisting upon a slavish adherence to the models of the Græco-Roman decadence; the lack of artistic individuality, which enabled professors and official sculptors to keep, not only all channels of instruction, but all public exhibitions under their own control, and, under the fallacious pretext of respect and love for classic tradition, to exclude from the latter all but conventional works, whose only affinity with the great period of Grecian art lay in the choice of subject, and the titles with which they were pretentiously bedizened.

It was against the coldness, the dryness, the lifelessness of this academic sculpture that the efforts of the Belgian artists of the initial period of our Renaissance (1830 to 1850 approximately) were mainly directed. These efforts were, it is true, timid, tentative, and

lacking in precision; but they proclaimed a longing to return to nature, a desire, rather perhaps than a fixed intention, to throw off the fetters of formulæ that had been accepted and followed out with servile submission. The term "modified naturalism," by which M. Camille Lemonier describes the art of this period is a happy one, and aptly characterises the works of this first epoch of transition and development. Submissive as yet to established methods and rules, artists hesitated to abandon them; but they were already conscious of a truer and more vital conception of beauty; and their chief merit lies herein, that in their more important works, they had evidently a healthier and more natural goal in view. Four names will suffice to characterise this period, those of G. Geefs, De Bay, Fraikin, and Simonis.

Guillaume Geefs and De Bay are the least realistic, the least "modern" and the most academic of the four. Geefs' allegorical and mythological subjects have the unpleasant coldness, the deplorable triviality of invention, the bad taste which characterise the period of 1830. Sometimes, however, he endeavours to escape towards a broader, truer, and less frigid art, and then he gives us decorative statues, the best of which is, perhaps, that of General Belliard, at Brussels. De Bay was a sculptor of a finer fibre. He was even more academic than Geefs, but he was also more of an artist. While submitting to conventional formulæ, he managed to produce several graceful groups, which have a very sensible charm of invention and composition. *The Natural Cradle*, in the Brussels Museum, is a gem from both points of view; delightful in arrangement, and touching in conception, it is certainly far from deserving the neglect it has met with from historiographers of Belgian art. I cannot speak so favourably of the *Captive Cupids*, and *Venuses*, and other *bourgeois* creations of Fraikin: but it must be allowed, that, in spite of their over-refinement and affected sentiment, they are marked by a conscientious study of the human body, and a certain spark of life, qualities which differentiate his works in the Brussels Museum from those of his contemporaries. These qualities are more pronounced and more vigorous in the works of Simonis, who was unquestionably the most gifted and energetic among the sculptors of this period. There is something more than promise in his statue of a *Young Girl* in the Brussels Museum; here we find the finest realisation of those naturalistic tenden-

cies we have mentioned ; the gray-veined white marble has life and feeling, and may well have served as a salutary example for succeeding artists. His *Godefroid de Bouillon*, in the Place Royale at Brussels, is more important. The figure, with the banner it unfurls so proudly, might serve as an emblem of the emancipation of sculpture ; it ensures its author a creditable place in the history of national art. Both in execution and conception this equestrian statue, remarkable alike for its freedom, its movement, its fine decorative qualities, and its fitness for the place it occupies, marks a serious advance on anything of the same period.

Nothing better, nothing indeed so good, in the shape of monumental art was produced during the twenty years following (1850 to 1870), which constitute the second stage of development of our national sculpture. But though the artists of the new generation were inferior in this *genre*, lacking the decorative sense so strongly marked in Simonis, they showed a greater detachment from superannuated formulæ, and their works have more of life and nature. Fassin's *Acqua sola*, Cattier's *Daphnis*, Bouré's *Child with a Lizard*, all three in the Brussels Museum, are characteristic examples of this period, and of its qualities and shortcomings. Their chief defect is the lack of inspiration. These three sculptors are not, indeed, masters, but they are conscientious and praiseworthy artists. They are hardly above the average, but they undoubtedly developed the qualities they dimly discerned in a few works by their predecessors, and gave them a definite form, boldly rejecting academic rules, and recognising no legitimate method of study but that of nature and the human body.

We now come to the period of actual fruition, and the first thing that strikes us is its proximity to our own times. It is, indeed, somewhat astonishing to find on inquiry that all its most remarkable works have been produced within the last twenty-five years. We propose to study the various manifestations of the revival in detail, but it has certain general characteristics which we may at once point out.

The tendencies of this revival, as of every other Renaissance in art, were above all things realistic and naturalistic. This is, indeed, the foundation and the basis of all artistic movements. In like manner, the course of all such movements is determined at the outset by the predilection of its leaders for some particular school, or indeed by

their aversion for some other. Among the Belgian sculptors, this aversion is very pronounced, and is inspired by their immediate predecessors, the devotees of that academic tradition which for more than a century arrested all development, and sterilised all effort. On this point, as upon that of the necessity of a conscientious study of Nature, our Belgian sculptors are, I may say, agreed. But we should find them less unanimous as to the school they prefer above all others, and if we were to consult them on this head, I fancy we should receive a great variety of answers. No doubt, if they were publicly interrogated they would reply, and with great propriety, that the study of Nature and of Greek art should take precedence of all other training. But though some would answer thus with full conviction, others would do so for fear of leading disciples astray; and these, while acknowledging the supremacy of Greek art, would feel that they themselves were drawn to other forms more directly in harmony with their own aims and aspirations. If, indeed, we take a rapid survey of the works of contemporary sculptors, we are struck by their diversity of aim; broadly speaking, we find among them three distinct groups, each group marked by certain clearly defined characteristics, and sharply differentiated from the others either by the temperament of the sculptors who compose it, or by their racial qualities. This preliminary classification, which will, I think, make our study of the school simpler and more exact, gives us three groups, which I propose to take in the following order :—

I. The "Classic" sculptors.
II. The Flemish sculptors.
III. The Walloon sculptors.

In analysing each of the three, I shall point out what are the features common to its members. I hasten to add that there is yet another development of Belgian sculpture which cannot be included under any of these three heads. Constantin Meunier, the artist who escapes my classification, cannot certainly be ranked among the Flemings, still less among the Walloons, and least of all among the "Classics." As it is impossible to bring him into these groups, and as he is an artist of great power and originality, and the creator of a novel form of art, he must be studied alone; a special section will therefore be devoted to him.

I will now examine each of these groups, its general character, and the works it has produced, and I wish first to remark that in my classification I have been guided solely by the *œuvre* of the artists I shall pass in review and not by any biographical facts, such as their birth, or the studios in which they spent their apprenticeship.

THE "CLASSIC" SCULPTORS: MESSRS. PAUL DE VIGNE, CHARLES VAN DER STAPPEN, THOMAS VINÇOTTE AND JACQUES DE LALAING.

I have given this title to the sculptors of my first group, because, although they have tried not to make a speciality of a particular category of subjects, their art is generally inspired by some classic theme. By classic, again, I do not refer solely to Greek art, but also to that of Italy, the influence of which is apparent at least in the early works of two among them, Messrs. Paul de Vigne and Thomas Vinçotte. Every phase of art has been studied by the learned and cultivated members of this group, and if they have shown a preference for that of Greece and Italy, it is because they have made plastic perfection their ideal, and naturally no other exemplars furnish them with so perfect a form. But if their predilections incline them to Greek and Italian art, they have not neglected the study of other schools; they are, as I have said, anxious not to specialise, and they have sought to be modern, even when preserving classic forms.

I have begun my study of our sculptural Renaissance with these artists, because in the group to which they belong there are two sculptors who are not only slightly older than all their *confrères*, but who are looked upon to a certain extent as the leaders in the artistic revival. These are Messrs. Paul de Vigne and Charles van der Stappen. M. de Vigne is the elder of the two, I believe; and we will begin our notices of the sculptors of his group with him.

M. de Vigne's personality[1] is one of the most attractive and lofty

[1] I borrow notes relating to the works of Messrs. De Vigne, Van der Stappen, Dillens and Meunier, from the biographies of Monsieur E. L. De Taye (*Les Artistes Belges Contemporains*. Castaigne. Brussels). In the cases of the other sculptors, I have been obliged to catalogue their works from my personal recollections, and the list is therefore incomplete.

Principal works of Paul de Vigne (born at Brussels, April 26, 1843): *Fra Angelico of*

in contemporary Belgian art. He is the perfect type of the classic sculptor, in the wider sense I have adopted above. Of all contemporary masters he, perhaps, has the purest style, and the most anxious desire for harmonious perfection. He has realised a poetic and ideal plastic type, which, modern as it is, is yet closely allied to the traditional beauty of Greek sculpture. His early works show the inspiration of Italian art, more especially that of Florence in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. But after several long sojourns in Rome and Paris, he underwent a change ; his genius sought its ideal in the age of Phidias and of Pericles, and to this ideal it has remained steadfast. It is interesting, I think, to hear the artist explain his own beliefs, and I therefore extract the following fragment of conversation, in which the sculptor fully expresses himself, from a book of M. de Taye's.[1]

" I love to fix my eyes and my aspirations on the art of antiquity, because in this art I find the eloquent consecration of the purest and

Fiesole ; statuette, Ghent, 1868. *Bust of Professor Moke ;* the property of the government ; Antwerp, 1870. *Heliotrope ;* marble statue, in the Ghent Museum. *The Republic ;* bronze bust. *An Italian Girl ;* marble bust, Brussels, 1872. *Portrait of M. Charles van Hutten,* marble, Ghent, 1874. *Domenica ;* plaster statue. *Pompeian Girl ;* bronze bust. *Caryatids* for the Conservatoire Royal, Brussels. *Volumnia ;* bronze bust, Brussels, 1875. *Emmanuel Hiel ;* bronze bust. *Domenica ;* marble statue, in the Antwerp Museum. Antwerp, 1876. *Roman Woman ;* bronze bust, Ghent, 1877. *Bust of Wilson ;* bronze, Musée Communal, Brussels. *Poverella ;* marble statuette. *Commemorative Monument,* to the memory of the horticulturist, Louis van Houte, erected at Brussels, 1878. *Psyche ;* bronze bust, in the Brussels Museum. *Narcissus ;* bronze bust, Paris, 1878. *The Coronation of Art ;* sketch for one of the groups of the façade of the Palais des Beaux Arts ; Brussels, 1880. *The Muse of History ;* Brussels, 1881. *Immortality ;* an allegory, executed in memory of Liévin de Winne ; in the Brussels Museum, 1883. *The Triumph of Art ;* group in bronze, on the façade of the Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels. *The Wilson Monument ;* in the Musée Communal, Brussels ; Antwerp, 1885. *Monument to Breydel and De Koninck,* at Bruges ; Brussels, 1888. *Bitterness ;* Ghent, 1889. *Head of a Man* (study for the statue of Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde) Paris, 1889. *Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde ;* marble statue, in the Square du Sablon, Brussels, 1890. *Commemorative Monument,* erected at Courtrai, to the memory of Mgr. de Haerne. *Funeral Monument* of the advocate, Meddepenningen, bronze ; Communal Cemetery, Ghent. *Funeral Monument* of the Gevaert family ; Communal Cemetery, Evere. *Sleep ;* a bronze medallion ; Brussels, 1893. *Bust of Jules Philippot. Design* for a commemorative monument to the memory of the Burgomaster Anspach (in collaboration with the architect Janlet). *Psyche ;* a bust in ivory. *Head of a Man ;* study ; Brussels, 1894.

[1] De Taye, *Les Artistes Belges Contemporains,* op. cit.

loftiest of principles—that which teaches us to combine *truth*, in other words Nature, with the *ideal*, in other words, the highest manifestation of an individuality. In all art, but more especially in sculpture, we must show respect for Nature, in order to avoid the conventional, the superficial, the unworthy. I certainly admire actuality in art, whose mission it is to interpret the tendencies of an epoch, but if by actuality we are to understand the development of the commonplace, of a *genre* unworthy the majesty of great art, I maintain that the standard of the age must inevitably be lowered. The artist must translate none but great ideas. It is his mission to speak to the soul while pleasing the eye. Art should express none but noble thoughts ; the principles of sculpture exclude vulgarity. The most dignified form of sculpture is the monumental form."

Truth, nature, ideality ; all De Vigne's art is comprised in these three words. Among his numerous and varied works, we are inclined to give the first places to *Immortality*, a marble statue in the Brussels Museum, and to two bronze groups, one *The Triumph of Art*, on the façade of the Palais des Beaux Arts at Brussels, the other the monument in bronze to Breydel and De Koninck at Bruges. The first named is certainly his masterpiece so far. All the sculptor's qualities find their highest expression here. This charming allegory was conceived and executed in memory of M. de Vigne's friend, Liévin de Winne, the most gifted of modern Belgian portrait-painters. It represents a Muse, who points heavenward, leaning on a column to which a palette and a palm-branch are attached. The conception is of the simplest, but its charm is irresistible. Nothing more perfect in its way can be imagined than the exquisite purity of the youthful figure, the masterly line of the composition, the noble tenderness of the face and of the consoling gesture. *The Triumph of Art* comes next to this masterpiece ; it too is admirable for its happy composition and the graceful lines of its figures ; the *Monument to Breydel and De Koninck*, which dominates the Grande Place at Bruges is energetic, inspiring, and heroic in character, and commands a tribute of praise ; but I confess that the very quintessence of De Vigne's poetic and idealistic art seems to me to lie in the slender grace of his Muse, and his own claim to *Immortality* may safely be allowed to rest on this conception.

Among artists M. Charles van der Stappen is generally allowed the same title to be considered one of the founders of the modern school as M. de Vigne. His art is above all things decorative in character, and Brussels owes many fine monumental works to him. He has shown how greatly the beauty of architecture may be enhanced by appropriate decoration in his pediment for the Alhambra theatre, the pediment to the left in the Conservatoire de Musique, representing *Orchestration*, his decorations of the Passage des Postes, and his caryatids for the house of the well-known architect De Curte. "To him belongs the honour," says M. Camille Lemonier in his biography of the artist, "of having raised monumental and decorative art from the low level to which it had sunk, and of having made it the equal of imaginative art." His best works, indeed, are all of a decorative character.

Immortality. Sepulchral Figure. By P. de Vigne.

They consist of the following : *Orchestration*, pediment for the Conservatoire, a broadly conceived and harmonious arrangement of line and proportions, showing the great advance made by the sculptor, even

Pax Vobiscum. Bronze bust. By C. Van der Stappen.

upon the most gifted of his predecessors, Simonis (compare the *Orchestration* bas-relief with the latter's pediment of the Théatre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels) ; *The Teaching of Art*, a monumental group in bronze, decorating the principal façade of the Palais des

Beaux Arts; a companion group to De Vigne's *Triumph of Art; William the Silent*, a beautiful and very characteristic statuette in the Square du Petit Sablon; a design for the decoration of the Botanic Gardens, a monumental work, to which all the Belgian sculptors will contribute, and of which the inception is due, I believe, to Van der Stappen; finally, a work in a less important *genre*, though no less admirable in its charm, its vigour, and its imaginative qualities, his silver centrepiece for the municipality of Brussels.[1]

Another characteristic of his art is the variety of the *genres* he has essayed at different times. He has tried his hand at everything—groups, statues, bas-reliefs, monumental works, and statuettes. He is one of the most accomplished craftsmen among Belgian sculptors, and knows every secret of his art. Some years ago he was appointed professor of

[1] Principal works of Charles van der Stappen (born at Brussels, September, 1843): *The Faun's Toilette;* plaster statue, Brussels, 1869. *Head of an Indian Woman;* bronze. *Head of a Faun;* marble, Ghent, 1871. *The Charmer;* plaster statue, Brussels, 1872. Decoration of the Passage des Postes. *Statues* for the Alhambra Theatre, and *Caryatids* for the architect De Curte's house at Brussels; 1874. *The Songstress;* bronze medallion. *Monument to the Memory of Alexandre Gendebien*, at Brussels. *Orchestration;* pediment in the court of the Conservatoire de Musique, Brussels. *Dawn and Twilight;* decorative candelabra for the Comte de Flandre's palace; Brussels, 1875 or 1876 *Monument to Baron Coppens*, near Sheel; Brussels, 1877. *The Man with the Sword;* marble statue, in the Brussels Museum. *David;* statue in wax. *A young Jewess;* marble bust. *La Pascuccia;* marble bust. *The Teaching of Art;* sketch in plaster for the bronze group on the façade of the Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels; Brussels, 1880, *Florentine Girl;* bronze, Brussels, 1881. Bronze bust of Philipson; Brussels, 1882. *St. Michael*, in the Gothic Hall of the Hôtel de Ville, Brussels. *Child with a Goat;* Brussels, 1884. *Memorial Bust* for the monument to Edouard Agneessens, in the cemetery of St. Josse-ten-noode; Brussels, 1887. *Man struck by lightning. William the Silent;* marble statue, in the Square du Petit Sablon, Brussels; Brussels, 1888. *The Sphinx;* bronze, Paris, 1889. *St. George. The Octopus;* bronze bas-relief, Brussels, 1889. *Pax Vobiscum;* bust. *Bronze Medallion of Henne*, late Secretary to the Académie des Beaux Arts, Brussels. *Silver Centre-piece*, executed for the town of Brussels; Central Group: *St. Michael defending the banner of the city*; Minor Group: *The Vows of Brussels; Legend of the Veillée des Dames; Translation of the Ashes of Ste. Gudule. Arthur Stevens;* bust. *The Legend of Orpheus* (*Happiness—Grief—Regret—Martyrdom—Immortality*); Brussels, 1891. *Ompdrailles*; bronze group, the property of the Government; Brussels, 1892. *Design* for decorations of the Jardin Botanique, Brussels; executed in collaboration with Constantin Meunier (candelabra, statues, groups, and other decorative motives); Brussels, 1893. *The Builders of Cities;* Brussels, 1894.

sculpture at the Académie des Beaux Arts of Brussels; there is now some question of making him president of the Academy, an appointment which would put the training of young Belgian artists and the direction of their first efforts into his hands. It would be difficult to find a better candidate for the post, and taking into account the happy influence he has exercised on contemporary art, the Government would be but discharging a debt of gratitude by his promotion. The most brilliant of his

The Builders of Cities. Group in plaster. By C. Van der Stappen.

pupils are M. Rousseau, whom we shall meet again among the Walloon sculptors, and Messrs. Guillaume Charlier and Samuel, who do not rightly belong to this group of classic sculptors, but whom I notice here as M. Van der Stappen's scholars. An emotional modern or the moderns, M. Guillaume Charlier's early works seem to have been inspired solely by M. Van der Stappen. His *Prayer* in the Brussels Museum is very refined in feeling, and more modern than the works by

which it is surrounded. In the style he has now adopted he seems to have been influenced to some extent by M. Constantin Meunier. The bas-reliefs of his monumental design *Fishers*, in which he records the principal phases of the lives of fisher-folk, are original and well conceived, and deserve attention. M. Samuel, an artist whose works at the exhibitions held by the "coming men" have been favourably received, and who attracted a good deal of notice at the Exhibition of Ivories at Antwerp and at the Cercle Artistique by his inventive talent and imaginative gifts, shows to great advantage in the monument he executed for the Commune of Ixelles to the memory of Charles de Coster, the author of the *Legend of Tiel Uylenspiegel.* This monument, which has lately been set up by the ponds at Ixelles, pleases by its familiar character, by its arrangement, and by the original conception of the figures, all very expressive of the writer's creations.

Bust of the Comtesse de Mérode. By T. Vinçotte.

Chronologically, M. Thomas Vinçotte is the third among this group

of classic sculptors. Coming a few years after Messrs. De Vigne and Van der Stappen, with the former of whom he has great affinities, he profited by the acquirements of his predecessors, and has made them his own, adding to them at the same time a more modern and energetic character. The qualities he shares with M. de Vigne are a passion for form and line, a scrupulous, indeed almost a religious care for rhythm and balance, an aspiration after noble and concise forms, and a determination to let nothing go out of his studio that cannot claim to possess stable and enduring elements.[1] He has not that ideal grace which characterises the author of *Immortality*, but on the other hand, he

Group for the Pediment of the Antwerp Museum. By T. Vinçotte.

is more vigorous and animated. It is this latent, restrained, and measured power, this sensation of intense life, chastened by a respect for

[1] Principal works of M. Thomas Vinçotte, with the approximate dates of their production: *Giotto;* a marble statue, in the Brussels Museum, 1875. *The Godecharles Monument*, in the Park at Brussels. *Music;* bas-relief on the principal façade of the Palais des Beaux Arts, 1882. *The Horse-breaker;* bronze group, in the Avenue Louise at Brussels, 1885. *Agneessens;* marble statue, on the Boulevard du Midi, Brussels; 1890. Group of horses and Tritons, in bronze, for the park of the Château d'Ardenne, 1892, 1893. Sketch of a group for the pediment of the Antwerp Museum, 1894. The same, an enlargement, 1895. *St. Cecilia;* a marble bust, 1895. In addition to these, he has produced a number of portrait busts, among them those of the King and Queen of the Belgians, the Comtesse de Mérode (reproduced), and the Comtesse de Lalaing.

form and line, which gives individuality to M. Vinçotte's art. His determination to express life in its most precise and striking form is the secret of his success in that long series of vigorous, elegant, and lifelike busts which have made his fame, and in the execution of which he seems

Bronze Statue of Cavelier de la Salle, at Chicago. By Jacques de Lalaing.

to me to have no rival. But though he finds the sculpture of busts a very interesting form of study, his favourite *genre* is monumental art; sculpture for the façades or pediments of buildings, or better still, statues to be seen in the open air, standing out in bold relief against the verdure of parks and avenues.

His principal works—for in this brief sketch I can mention only the most characteristic and important productions of each artist—are, to my mind, the bas-relief of *Music* on the façade of the Palais des Beaux Arts, a nervous and animated composition, admirable in design, and marked by great distinction in execution, one of the best, in fact, of modern bas-reliefs; his dignified and dramatic Statue of Agneessens; and the sketches (in two sizes) of the groups of *Fame* for the pediment of the Antwerp Museum. The first sketch for this group, which will gain greatly, I think, when executed on the proposed scale, and seen from below, is, in my opinion, the best and most characteristic of M. Vinçotte's works. The horses are the most lifelike, the most decorative, and the most magnificent he has ever sculptured; their impetuous movement is superb, their dash and ardour irresistible; the general lines of the group are extremely happy, and I think all artists will share my admiration when they see these fiery steeds silhouetted against the blue sky over the entrance of the Antwerp Museum.

I can glean few particulars concerning M. Jacques de Lalaing, the last of this group of sculptors.[1] He is known both as painter and sculptor, though he is far from showing an equal aptitude for the two arts. The pictures I have seen by him proclaim an energetic sculptural temperament, and the most absolute lack of all pictorial gifts. I cannot admire his painting, and I know but little of his sculpture. But his monumental group in the cemetery at Evere, near Brussels, is quite sufficient to justify my respect for the artist. As it is the only example of his work I shall mention, I may be allowed, perhaps, to briefly describe it, and to express the great admiration I feel for it.

The group, or rather the monument, is a tomb. It marks the resting-place of the English officers and soldiers killed in the battle of Waterloo. Rising from a grassy mound, surrounded by a low wall of red granite, it consists of a base formed of large blocks of the same granite, of a sarcophagus, upon which is sculptured a cross, and of a bronze pedestal, supporting a figure of England, who kneels with one knee upon it. On the bronze pedestal is the brief inscription: *Patria Mortuorum memor.* At

[1] Robert Cavelier de la Salle, to whom a statue by M. Lalaing has been erected in the Park at Chicago, was a native of Rouen, who explored the Missisippi in the reign of Louis XIV.

Statue on the Monument at Evere to the English who fell at Waterloo.
By Jacques de Lalaing.

the corners of the tomb are three couchant lions in bronze, and a full drapery thrown across the tomb and its pedestal partly conceals the various instruments of war, guns, flags, lances, helmets and plumed shakos, heaped together in skilful confusion. I have described this tomb at length, because it is one of the finest works of Belgian sculpture, and I should like to see it more widely known. It has a grandiose and heroic character unusual in modern art. All its details are broad and noble—the composition, the solemn and majestic figure, the lions, especially the wounded one who presses against the tomb, and seems almost to weep, so powerful is the tragic expression of suffering in his head. Those who sleep their last below, and dream of battles and of glory, should rest well. They died on the field of honour, and a soul heroic as their own has given them a monument that will perpetuate their memory, and command the homage of all who visit their tomb.

CHAPTER II

THE FLEMISH SCULPTORS: MESSRS. LAMBEAUX, JULIEN DILLENS, AND JULES LAGAË

When the idea of a study on contemporary Belgian sculptors first occurred to me, one name rose at once in my mind, that of Jef Lambeaux. This name, the most famous and the most popular in our modern school of sculpture, seemed to sum up its general tendencies, and to typify our national art. At the first glance, this opinion is plausible enough. Flemish art has nearly always predominated among us, and the personification of Flemish art might therefore fairly serve as the personification of national art. Lambeaux, however, is hardly a perfect prototype of the Flemish Renaissance; he could not be considered representative of those artists whom I have included in the "Classic" group; still less of those I call the Walloons, with whom he has nothing in common, whose aims, indeed, are directly opposed to his own. If his art be national, it is so only as regards Flanders; with this reservation, we may accept the term as characterising the three sculptors we are about to study.

All three are Flemings, not only by temperament, but by birth, education, and inspiration. They make no pretensions to learning and culture; their knowledge is confined to their art, which they find all-sufficing. They have the reward of this concentration, for no modern sculptors are greater masters of their craft. They know all its secrets; every *genre*, every method of treatment, is familiar to them.[1] Their technical facility is, no doubt, due to the fact that in early life they

[1] This same technical mastery distinguishes M. van der Stappen among the Classics, and, in a lesser degree, M. Rousseau among the Walloons; but it is not a characteristic of either group, as it is of the Flemings.

practised those humbler and more mechanical branches of their art which give great manual dexterity. Lambeaux in his youth carved figure-heads for ships ; Lagaë also began life as a wood-carver, and Dillens as a rough-hewer and decorator.

In further contrast to the art of the "Classics," which, in their more important works at least, is allegorical and synthetic, the art of the Flemish sculptors is, as a rule, episodic and picturesque, an art of observation and analysis, of impression and sentiment. Their first care is to make their work true and lifelike, and to this preoccupation they are inclined to sacrifice all others. Flemings by birth, they are so still more by temperament and inspiration. They are more closely allied to the great Flemish sculptors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries than any of the other groups, and follow their tradition more faithfully. We must note, however, that these modern Flemings, Dillens and Lagaë especially, are Italianised Flemings ; they have not only visited Italy, but have lived there, and their study of the Italian masters of the Renaissance has taught them the necessity of confining life and its exuberance within the limits of noble and harmonious forms.

In the case of Lambeaux, a natural impetuosity of temperament leads sometimes to a neglect of that perfection of form all the greatest masters have accounted indispensable. But in spite of the strange mixture of defects and qualities which make up his artistic personality, he is undoubtedly the most remarked among contemporary Belgian sculptors. To him we owe the most important and masterly achievement of modern art in Belgium. His masterpiece, the fountain at Antwerp, is one of those works whose immortality is assured ; it is already as integral a part of the city as Quentin Matsys' well, Rubens' pictures in the cathedral, or that cathedral itself, the spire of which dominates the town.

To judge from the articles and studies devoted to Lambeaux both in Belgium and abroad, it would seem to be a difficult matter to judge of his art dispassionately. For some of his critics, he is the greatest sculptor of the age ; every work he has produced, from *The Kiss* onwards, has been a masterpiece. They put the Anversois sculptor on the same level as Michelangelo, Rubens, and Jordaens, with whom they constantly compare him. Others, to whom the violence, the exuberant life of his essentially Flemish style is antipathetic, look for

qualities in his art which are not to be found, and incontinently pronounce him a middling and ordinary sculptor.

I will try to speak of him with more moderation and with greater justice, showing him as he is, an extraordinary mixture of faults and perfections, a mixture, moreover, in which perfections predominate, for has he not produced the Antwerp *Fountain*, and the *Merry Song?* It may not be out of place to give a few biographical details, which explain his works to some extent, and throw light on his personality.

The son of a workman, he was born at Antwerp, July 13, 1852. From a very early age, he showed a remarkable aptitude for drawing. At six years old, says one of his biographers, he drew strange beasts with a piece of chalk on the walls and pavements of Antwerp, which the passers-by would stop to wonder at. As soon as he could read and write, he was apprenticed to a carver of figure-heads for ships. Meanwhile, he also studied at the Academy schools, and in his leisure hours, made his first essays in sculpture. At sixteen, having completed his course at the Academy, he received his first official commission, two reliefs for the tympana of the Flemish theatre. He took part at the age of seventeen in the preliminary competition for the *prix de Rome*, which would have enabled him to finish his art education in Italy, and came out first three times, but, falling ill from fatigue and exhaustion, was unable to compete in the final examination. During this early stage of his career, he met with the sculptor Carpeaux's assistant at Antwerp, and to his counsels Lambeaux seems to have listened with respect.

Having missed the *prix de Rome*, he found himself without means. In order to live, he had, perforce, to produce works at once, and works likely to please the taste of the Anversois merchants and stockbrokers. For his own part, he had an intense wish to be "modern"; his aspirations, and the exigencies of his patrons, combined to produce a whole series of works, *The Accident*, *The Undertaker*, *The Acrobat*, *The Lucky Number*, *The "Sa Pater,"* &c., groups and statuettes which have little affinity with his works of to-day, and the whole merit of which lies in the picturesque and dexterous treatment of modern costume.

After the execution of these early works, and the momentary success they brought him, came a long interval of neglect and poverty, when Lambeaux was at last forced to give up sculpture for a time and go

to Paris, where he earned his bread by painting as an assistant in a friend's studio. An extensive order for busts from a wax-work museum saved him from his critical position, and enabled him to return to sculpture. In 1880 he produced *The Kiss*, which I consider to be really his first group. *The Kiss* had a great and immediate success. It was bought by the Antwerp Museum, and Lambeaux, then twenty-eight years old, was sent to Italy by the town of Antwerp to complete his artistic education. At Florence he made acquaintance with the works of Giovanni da Bologna, for which he felt the most enthusiastic admiration, and here the idea of his fountain first occurred to him.

The most salient and significant points in this perfunctory sketch of the artist's career are, I think, his lack of learning, his precocious and extraordinary gifts, a certain want of taste in his choice of subjects, and his enthusiastic admiration for Carpeaux and Giovanni da Bologna. This admiration was, in fact, the tardy awakening of Lambeaux's own temperament. It found its highest and happiest expression in the group he executed on his return from Florence, *The Merry Song* (*La Folle Chanson*). This group, a marvel of healthy vitality, represents an old satyr, whose huge carcase shakes with formidable laughter, as he listens to the merry song of a nymph. He has seated himself on the ground, overcome by his mirth, and lays one hand on his heaving body, while with the other he makes an effort—feeble enough, so helpless is he—to repulse a chubby child, who approaches to listen. His little eyes seem to glisten with moisture; his face is puckered into a grimace of sensual satisfaction, as the young singer leans towards him to murmur the last words of the sprightly refrain in his ear. This seems to me the most perfect of Jef Lambeaux's groups. It has all his fine qualities, without any of the defects of his more recent works. It is instinct with that lusty Flemish health in the expression of which his only rivals are Rubens and Jordaens. It has that force, that intensity of life, which no contemporary sculptor can render as he does. Finely composed, and very pleasing in line, this group is bathed in warm and brilliant colour, and in a glowing light, which seems to be thrown off from the robust contours of the three figures. As I saw it not long ago, cast in a light-coloured bronze, which brought out its qualities of colour, and the firm precision of its lines, its most fitting home seemed to me, not one of the chilly galleries

The Merry Song. By Jef Lambeaux.

to which our sculptors' works are generally consigned, but some luxurious reception room, its walls glowing with pictures by Rubens and Jordaens.

The *Fountain of Brabo*, in front of the Hôtel de Ville at Antwerp, is less perfect in composition perhaps, though superb in outline, and full of boldness and originality in conception. The myth which furnished its design tells how in the days of Cæsar a cruel giant established himself on the shores of the Scheldt, near Antwerp, and stopped all passing merchants, demanding half their wares. He punished those who resisted or evaded his claims by cutting off their right hands. "Antwerp," says the legend, "might still have been groaning under his tyranny, had not Salvius Brabo, King of Tongres, husband of Swarma, Cæsar's cousin, come to the rescue. He defied and slew the giant, and by way of reprisal, cut off his right hand." The Antwerp fountain shows Brabo after he has killed the monster. He hastens to the town to announce his triumph, and nearing the gates, raises the trophy of victory, the severed hand, to throw it in before him. A detailed description would give but a confused idea of the work. It must be seen in its picturesque setting in the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville to ensure a proper appreciation of its fitness for the place it adorns, its ingenious and complicated composition, and the splendid vigour of the female figures, who, as personifications of the river Scheldt, bear on their stately shoulders the vessels and commerce of the city. Not the least among Lambeaux's titles to fame, to my mind, is the patriotic sympathy he displays in this gift to his native town of a monument so full of life, so appropriate to its tastes, so original and poetical in its glorification of the commercial progress and growing wealth of the community.

I cannot speak so admiringly of Lambeaux's more recent works. His group, *Intoxication*, lately exhibited at the Champ de Mars in Paris, strikes me as coarse and exaggerated. Here he no longer represents the healthy robustness of form characteristic of his own countrywomen ; the female figures are heavy, obese, almost bestial in their repulsive development. I am willing to admit that the group may be admired for its composition and movement, and for that exuberance of life with which the Antwerp sculptor endows all his creations, but I shall never be persuaded of its beauty. Neither Rubens nor Jordaens, who have been so often quoted by the apologists of this work, would ever have created such

Robbing the Eagle's Nest

sculptors' works are generally consigned, but some luxurious [illegible] room, its walls glowing with pictures by Rubens and Jordaens. The *Fountain of Brabo*, in front of the Hôtel de Ville at Antwerp, is [illegible] perfect in composition perhaps, though superb in outline, and full of boldness and originality in conception. The myth which furnished its design tells how in the days of Cæsar a cruel giant established himself on the shores of the Scheldt, near Antwerp, and stopped all passing [illegible], demanding half their wares. He punished those who resisted or evaded his claims by cutting off their right hands. "Antwerp," says the legend, "might still have been groaning under his tyranny, had not Salvius Brabo, King of Tongres, husband of Swarma, Cæsar's cousin, come to the rescue. He defied and slew the giant, and by way of reprisal, cut off his right hand." The Antwerp fountain shows Brabo after he has killed the monster. He hastens to the town to announce his triumph, and nearing the gates, raises the trophy of victory, the severed hand, to throw it in before him. A detailed description would give but a confused idea of the work. It must be seen in its picturesque setting in the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville to ensure a proper appreciation of its fitness for the place it adorns, its ingenious and complicated composition, [illegible] the splendid vigour of the female figures, which are personifications of the river Scheldt, bear on their stately shoulders the vessels and commerce of the city. Not the least among Lambeaux's titles to fame, to my mind, is the patriotic sympathy he displays in this gift to his native town of a monument so full of life, so appropriate to its tastes, so original and poetical in its glorification of the commercial progress and growing wealth of the community.

I cannot speak so admiringly of Lambeaux's more recent works. His group, *Intoxication*, lately exhibited at the Champ de Mars in Paris, strikes me as coarse and exaggerated. Here he no longer represents the healthy robustness of form characteristic of his own countrywomen; the female figures are heavy, obese, almost bestial in their repulsive development. I am willing to admit that the group may be admired for its composition and movement, and for that exuberance of life with which the Antwerp sculptor endows all his creations, but I shall never be persuaded of its beauty. Neither Rubens nor Jordaens, who have been so often quoted by the apologists of this work, would ever have created such

Robbing the Eagle's Nest.

figures or admitted them into their pictures. It is a feminine type hitherto unknown to art, even to Lambeaux's own art. We can only hope that it may never be reproduced by its author.

The colossal bas-reliefs of *The Passions of Humanity* are Lambeaux's most important work as regards its dimensions, and the immense amount of labour it represents.[1] In conception, it seems to me empty and theatrical, and the arrangement of the groups, which have little coherence as a whole, is none of the happiest. But that portion of the relief which deals with the Joys of Humanity is admirable, more especially the frenzied dance of the group of Bacchantes, or laughing girls, their faces radiant with mirth and pleasure, and the calmer group of Lovers, a graver, more thoughtful, more dignified conception than we find elsewhere in the sculptor's *œuvre*.

When an artist has given us both good and bad, it is my practice as a rule to pass over the bad, and to dwell only on the good. Jef Lambeaux has not only produced excellent work; he is the author of the Antwerp Fountain, which I have already pronounced a masterpiece, and I am much inclined to place *The Merry Song* in the same category. I might, it is true, have been content to notice only these, and the finer portions of his bas-relief. But I have given my opinion of the *Intoxication*, and pointed out certain defects in the bas-relief in the hope that these friendly criticisms may bring home to the artist a perception of his tendency to licence of form, and exaggeration of movement. I would also warn him against the inflated panegyric of his admirers, journalists and æsthetes whose knowledge of Michelangelo is confined to his name, but who couple it and that of their idol with wearisome iteration, in spite of the essential incongruity of the two. The sculptor of *The Merry Song* and of the Antwerp Fountain has little indeed in common with the creator of the tombs of the Medici. The comparison of Lambeaux with Rubens and Jordaens is a legitimate one; he may be considered complementary to those two great personalities; but we must not go farther for a parallel, and certainly not to Italy. Of all modern sculptors, Lambeaux is the most powerful and vital; as far as Flanders is concerned, his art is

[1] It measures 6 metres by 11, and the reliefs are 1 metre 40 c. deep at their highest. A cast from this relief will be exhibited at the Institut des Beaux Arts, Paris, this winter.

truly national and representative. Let him be content with his undoubted gifts; let him try to moderate his form, and carry on the tradition of the great Flemish masters. The part is a sufficiently glorious one. He has proved it so in the past; he may, if he wishes, prove it so in the future.[1]

Taking his works as a whole, M. Julien Dillens is less vigorous than Jef Lambeaux; but, on the other hand, his level of excellence is higher. If we look upon him in his true character, that of a decorative artist, we may perhaps accept him as the most perfect of modern Belgian sculptors. His personality is a highly attractive one, and we may study him with unmixed pleasure. Whichever of his decorative works we take, we find in it the same charm, the same coherence of detail, the same care for general effect, the same perfection. Nevertheless, we must choose some typical examples, and this is a matter of real difficulty; for the more familiar we are with his works, the more perplexed we are as to their relative merits. I will take those which first suggest themselves to my mind, and endeavour to trace in them the more active principles of Julien Dillens' temperament. Foremost among them is the beautiful pediment of the *Hospice des trois Alliés* at Uccle. Its execution is memorable in more ways than one, for it was the first monumental relief, in Belgium, at least, in which an attempt was made to grapple with the difficulties of modern costume. And yet it is as easy and natural as if figures had been commonly treated in this manner. In its noble and

[1] In addition to the works above described, we may mention the numerous remarkable busts he has produced, among them the portraits of M. Buls, the Burgomaster of Brussels, M. Paul Janson, the late Jean Rousseau, Mdlle. Beernaert, and Madame van Bruyssel.

The following is a list of his principal works, with their approximate dates of production :—First period. *War;* a group in plaster, 1871. *Bacchus;* terra-cotta, 1872. *Children Dancing*, *The Buffoon*, *The Compulsory Bath*, *The Acrobat*, *The Undertaker*, *The Lucky Number*, *The Left Hand*, all executed at Antwerp between 1875 and 1879. *The Accident;* a group, Antwerp. *Blind;* Ghent, 1880.

Second period. *The Kiss;* bronze group, in the Antwerp Museum, 1881. *The Wrestlers;* marble group, Brussels, 1882. *The Orgy;* group in plaster, Florence, 1882. *The Merry Song;* Antwerp, 1884. *Brabo;* Antwerp, 1885. *The Antwerp Fountain;* plaster, Ghent, 1886. *Ibid.;* bronze, in the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, Antwerp, 1887. *Humanity. The Robber of the Eagle's Nest;* Brussels, 1890. *Intoxication;* group in plaster, Brussels, 1890. *Bas-relief of the Passions of Humanity*, 1895.

Cartoon for the bas-relief of the Passions of Humanity. By Jef Lambeaux.

touching simplicity it reminds me of the beautiful bas-relief on the hospital at Pistoja. I was passing through the Grand Place of Brussels the other day, and looking up at the King's Palace, I saw the gilded Lansquenets poised upon the dormer windows, unfurling their banners against the blue sky, blowing trumpets, playing fifes and drums with martial ardour. Would it be possible, I asked myself, to invest a somewhat hackneyed theme with more picturesque gaiety, or to imagine a more decorative costume than that of the warriors who guard the king's house night and day? There could be but one answer, for Dillens is a consummate master of costume, ancient and modern, and more important still, he knows how to make the figures he creates wear their dresses gracefully, for the accomplished *costumier* is familiar, not only with the garb, but with the fashions and refinements of all ages. Some time ago I saw in his studio a little figure, a mere accessory, designed for the decoration of the mask over the curtain of a theatre. It was only the head of a young girl crowned with vine leaves. She looks straight in front of her, at the spectators, in fact, laying one finger upon her lips, to indicate, as one would see on the rising of the curtain, that the play is about to begin, and that there must be silence. The pretty fancy is most gracefully expressed, and when we remember that the mask is a detail no one may notice, save, perhaps, some artist, dreaming with upturned eyes, and that the little masterpiece is itself only an accessory, we shall have some idea of the care and finish he bestows on all his decorative work.

Another happy inspiration of the same kind is his idea of a fountain for the ponds at Ixelles, a work which would give an artistic character to this cheerful corner of suburban Brussels. At the end of one of the ponds there is a mass of rock, and a grotto, erected at the time of the making of the ponds, by Blaton Aubert, the inventor of those hideous artificial rocks which still adorn many little gardens in Brussels. In itself, the erection is commonplace and uninteresting enough. To Dillens, however, it suggested a delightful decorative scheme, the model of which appeared a week or two later in his studio. On the summit of the rock he placed a magnificent Pegasus with large outspread wings pawing the air. On his back stands a heroic Perseus, his lance in one hand, in the other the mute and terrible head of the Gorgon. This

Bas relief for the Library &c

simplicity it reminds me of the beautiful bas-relief on the at Pistoja. I was passing through the Grand Place of Brussels the other day, and looking up at the King's Palace, I saw the gilded Lansquenets poised upon the dormer windows, unfurling their banners against the blue sky, blowing trumpets, playing fifes and drums with martial ardour. Would it be possible, I asked myself, to invest a somewhat hackneyed theme with more picturesque gaiety, or to imagine a more decorative costume than that of the warriors who guard the king's house night and day? There could be but one answer, for Dillens is a consummate master of costume, ancient and modern, and more important still, he knows how to make the figures he creates wear their dresses gracefully, for the accomplished *costumier* is familiar, not only with the garb, but with the fashions and refinements of all ages. Some time ago I saw in his studio a little figure, a mere accessory, designed for the decoration of the mask over the curtain of a theatre. It was only the head of a young girl crowned with vine leaves. She looks straight in front of her, at the spectators, in fact, laying one finger upon her lips, to indicate, as one would see on the rising of the curtain, that the play is about to begin, and that there must be silence. The pretty fancy is most prettily expressed, and when we remember that the mask is a detail no one may notice, save, perhaps, some artist, dreaming with upturned eyes, and that the little masterpiece is itself only an accessory, we shall have some idea of the care and finish he bestows on all his decorative work.

Another happy inspiration of the same kind is his idea of a fountain for the ponds at Ixelles, a work which would give an artistic character to this cheerful corner of suburban Brussels. At the end of one of the ponds there is a mass of rock, and a grotto, erected at the time of the making of the ponds, by Blaton Aubert, the inventor of those hideous artificial rocks which still adorn many little gardens in Brussels. In itself, the erection is commonplace and uninteresting enough. To Dillens, however, it suggested a delightful decorative scheme, the model of which appeared a week or two later in his studio. On the summit of the rock he placed a magnificent Pegasus with large outspread wings pawing the air. On his back stands a heroic Perseus, his lance in one hand, in the other the mute and terrible head of the Gorgon. This

J. Gibbons. fecit

Bas relief for the Holloway Institute

head he holds out to the monster below. Andromeda, meanwhile, has advanced to the mouth of the cave, and clasps her hands in terror at the sight of the dragon, foaming and raging in the waters. The design is charming in every detail. Negotiations have been opened between the

Medallion commemorative of the Godefroy gift to the town of Brussels. By J. Dillens.

artist and the municipality of Ixelles, and I sincerely hope that they may result in the carrying out of this happy conception.

An innovator in all kinds of decorative work, Dillens was, I think, the first among us to execute bas-reliefs commemorating some current

event. As an example of what he has done in this *genre*, I may call attention to the two bas-reliefs here reproduced. The first—which represents an old man examining a human heart—commemorates the course of anatomical lectures given by Dr. Heger at the Institut Solvay, the second, the Godefroy bequest for the foundation of a technical school of joinery. These reproductions will give some idea of the extraordinary variety and fertility of his imagination. The suggestive quality of Dillens' art makes it easy to discuss him, and I have, indeed, written this notice so rapidly, that I find I have omitted to mention the artist's principal work, the group of *Justice* in the Palais de Justice at Brussels. Descriptions of works of art are, however, of comparatively little value, and it will be sufficient to call the attention of the student to the work. This, indeed, has already been done, and with more authority than I would venture to assume, by an international Jury of his *confrères*, which, on three separate occasions, awarded him a gold medal for his group.[1]

Sepulchral Figure. By J. Dillens.

[1] Principal works of M. Julien Dillens (born at Antwerp in 1849): *Bust of a Child;* Antwerp, 1870. *A Street Arab;* marble bust. *Medallion Portrait of M. Nys d'Hardewyk;* Brussels, 1872. *Bust of the late Henri Dillens;* Ghent, 1874. *Echo;* terra-cotta, Spa, 1875. *An Enigma;* Antwerp, 1876. Model of the bas-relief for the northern pediment of the *Hospice des Trois Alliés* at Uccle; Brussels, 1877. *Bronze Busts of De Pède and Rubens;* in the Brussels Museum, 1879. *Hermes;* marble and

I have yet to discuss the art of M. Jules Lagaë, the third sculptor of the Flemish group. Considerably younger than Julien Dillens and Jef Lambeaux (he was the pupil of the latter), Jules Lagaë's work and his personality have combined to give him an honourable place beside the two masters we have been studying. In defining the general character of modern Flemish sculpture at the beginning of the present chapter I defined that of M. Jules Lagaë. But if it be necessary to point out some more distinctive feature, I will say that his chief charm to me is the tender sentiment that inspires all his work. He has that worship of life which is common to all these sculptors, but with him the expression of that life is calm, healthy, and tranquil. The group of *Mother and Child* here reproduced is an excellent example of his delicate sentiment, and serene conception. The mother is the artist's young wife ; her baby, wearing a loose frock that falls in broad folds, stands on the ledge of a window or balcony, supported by her arms. Both are looking straight before them, probably at their friend the sculptor, who thus immortalises them in clay. The expression of both is charming, the mother's all love and sweetness, the child's full of a wondering curiosity as he gazes, with round astonished eyes, at the mysterious things before him.

I also reproduce the group known as *Expiation*, because it is one of

bronze. *Etruria ;* bronze bust, Brussels, 1880. *Herkenbald*, the Brutus of Brussels ; Antwerp, 1882. *Justice ;* group in plaster, Amsterdam, 1883. Model of the bas-relief for the southern pediment of the Hospice des Trois Alliés at Uccle ; Brussels, 1884. *A Kneeling Figure ;* bought by the Government ; Antwerp, 1885. *Statue of the Jurisconsult, H. Metdepenningen*, in the square of the Palais de Justice at Ghent. *Bust of M. Bergman*, 1887. *Bust of Léon Frédéric*, 1888. *Van Orley ;* marble statue in the Square du Petit Sablon, Brussels. *The Lansquenets* on the roof of the King's Palace at Brussels ; Brussels, 1889. *Jean de Nivelles ;* statue on the façade of the Palais de Justice at Nivelles. Marble statues of *St. Louis* and *St. Victor* at Epernay. *Bust of Léon Herbo. Melancholy. Medallion Portrait of Ernest Slingeneyer ;* Brussels, 1890. *The Car of Peace ;* Brussels, 1891. *Flandria. Germania. Minerva. St. Sebastian ;* Ghent, 1892. *Allegretto ;* Antwerp, 1892. *Genii ;* from the tomb of the Morelli family at Laeken. Marble busts of M. Rigaux's children. *Monumental Art and Industrial Art ;* Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels. Design for the decoration of the Gothic façade of the Hôtel de Ville at Ghent, 1893. *Minerva ;* statuette in ivory and bronze, 1894. Statuette, in memory of the completion of the King's palace ; Brussels, 1894. Medallion, commemorative of the Godefroy bequest ; Brussels, 1894. Bas-relief, commemorative of the foundation of the Institut Solvay ; Brussels, 1894. Design for a monumental fountain for the ponds at Ixelles ; Brussels, 1895.

the best and most important of Lagaë's works. The subject, a somewhat too complicated theme in itself, to my mind, is taken from an old Flemish chronicle of the time of Charles the Good, which tells the story of "two parricides, who were driven out of their city, chained together by the neck, and sent to do penance in distant lands at the tombs

Mother and Child. Group in plaster. By Jules Lagaë.

of the saints." The artist represents the two sufferers at the moment of return, old, exhausted, their limbs stiff and shrunken with toil and privation, their hair and beards wild and unkempt, caring for nothing, thinking of nothing, save perhaps of the terror of dying on the road. The feebler of the two lags a little behind; worn out with his long

march, he presses his left hand painfully to his thigh, as if to help himself along, while with his right he seeks a momentary relief from

Expiation. Bronze Group. By Jules Lagaë.

the pressure of the horrible iron collar which has been eating into his flesh for years.

I have noted the obscurity of the subject. This is a defect, for all plastic work should carry its own explanation ; but the group is nevertheless a fine creation, thoughtful, accomplished, and above all, vital.

The Kiss. By Jules Lagaë.

There is, moreover, a pathos and pity in the conception, the outcome of those emotional and moral qualities which characterise nearly all Lagaë's works.

At the Salon at Ghent this year he exhibited a bust of *St. John*,

almost Florentine in its refinement and grace, and some heads of children, lovely as those of Duquesnoy. I have also seen a model in his studio, which shows we may shortly hope for a more serious and personal work, or to be more exact, for one more characteristic of his art. This is a design for a monumental group in honour of Flanders, the artist's birth-place. He represents his country as a young woman, draped in the mantle of Flanders, and seated on the broad back of a Flemish stallion, which paws the ground impatiently. In her arms she holds a child, the Future of Flanders, and lays the reins in his little hand, with joyful hope and confidence. As far as it is possible to judge at present, this group seems to me Jules Lagaë's most powerful and original creation. The sculptor has now begun to work at it in life-size. May he retain all the vigorous life, the inspiration, the majesty of the model ! If he does this, he will have raised a noble monument to his country, and the city that owns it will possess a masterpiece truly characteristic of Flemish art.[1]

[1] Principal works of M. Jules Lagaë (born at Roulers, 1862) : *Abel;* plaster, 1886. *Silenus;* a statuette in bronze, 1886. *The Kiss;* terra-cotta bust, 1887. *Medallion of Max Waller*, 1889. *Expiation;* group in bronze, in the Ghent Museum ; Florence, 1890. *Mother and Child;* plaster group, Florence, 1891. *St. John, Heads of Children, Bust of Guido Gezelle*, 1894. *Flanders;* design for a monumental statue, 1891.

CHAPTER III

THE WALLOON SCULPTORS;[1] MESSRS. ACHILLE CHAINAYE, JEAN-MARIE GASPAR, AND VICTOR ROUSSEAU

In my introduction to this study I tried to bring out a fact hardly realised by the general public, namely, that the Belgian sculpture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance was by no means exclusively Flemish, but that, on the contrary, its inception and first development took place in the Walloon provinces, and that the Walloon school, a very brilliant one down to the close of the sixteenth century, created an individual style. This school has revived again in the person of the three sculptors I am about to study. A later development, the art of this group is of a more modern character than that of other Belgian sculptors, and it is this modernity which distinguishes it most sharply from the "Classics," with whom its members have a good deal in common, as, for instance, their culture, and their worship of form. In the art of the Walloons, how-

[1] Among the Walloon sculptors I ought perhaps to include M. Louis Devillez, whose *St. George*, *Salome*, *The Sylvans*, and various medallions, formerly exhibited in Brussels, had a very legitimate success. But it is now some years ago since these works appeared here; and M. Devillez has settled in Paris, and rarely exhibits in Brussels. I have a distinct recollection, however, of the impression his refined and graceful work made upon my mind, and as M. Devillez seems to me, both by birth and temperament, to belong to this group of Walloons, I am anxious to say that it is lack of knowledge, and no want of respect for his art, which prevents my giving a fuller account of him. M. Mignon, also a Walloon by birth, is the author of a much admired work, which has been made very popular in Belgium by reproductions, *The Man with the Bull*. The general character of his art, however, scarcely entitles him to rank among the Walloon sculptors, in addition to which, I have never seen any other work by him possessing the masterly qualities of this first group, which, cast in bronze, now adorns a public place at Liège.

ever, there is an element of youth entirely personal to themselves. Coming after the "Classics," they were not affected, like the latter, by the dying influences of the academic tradition. If their art shows traces of any influence from without, indeed, it is that of M. Paul de Vigne's early works in the Italian style. And here again, this is merely the bond of union between them and their artistic forefathers, the primitive Italians. It is the art of this school that they seem to admire above all others, and in modern times these young Walloons have certainly approached more closely than any other artists to the Florentine precursors of Michelangelo. They have, indeed, something of the exquisite freshness, grace, and purity of Mino da Fiesole, Desiderio da Settignano, Donatello (in his first manner), Rossellino, the Robbia, and Ghiberti. These are the masters they seem to acknowledge; if they do not achieve the perfection of their prototypes, they at least approach it in their best works, and lest I should seem to exaggerate, I will at once call attention to the examples that justify my criticism. Works such as Chainaye's *Peaceful Shore*, Devillez's *St. George*, Gaspar's *Adolescents*, and the bust by Rousseau known as *Happy*, would be by no means out of place in a gallery of Florentine sculpture of the period I refer to, such as the Museo Nazionale at Florence. I do not, be it understood, claim equality with the Florentines for our Walloon artists. Indeed, I think comparisons between ancient and modern art should never be pushed too far. Ancient works, profiting often by the effects of time, and of the fame they have enjoyed for centuries, become, in many cases, "incomparable"; all I assert is that this Walloon sculpture is of the same family—that it is a new branch, grafted on to the once glorious, and now almost withered tree of Florentine art.

The grace, the freshness, the purity I have characterised as the "notes" of this school, are found in a very marked degree in the works I have mentioned, which are, so far, the best it has produced. Its members are still young, and their art has not yet acquired that homogeneity and unity of aim which marks the older and more traditional schools. One of its sculptors, indeed, M. Jean-Marie Gaspar, is somewhat difficult to classify, owing to the variety of tendencies discernible in his works. His beautiful group, *Adolescents*, and two

or three of his statuettes have the qualities I have described as distinctive of this school. But works he has executed before and since are less perfect and less immaterial, and on the other hand, more energetic and vigorous. They have little to connect them with the art of the Walloons, save their flexibility and elegance of line.

The most mature of these sculptors is Achille Chainaye. The brother of the refined and tender poet of *L'Ame des Choses*, and the friend of the composer, Erasme Raway, the two artists who have given the most perfect expression to the Walloon spirit in literature and in music, he seems to have come to complete the artistic renaissance of his race. He has so completed it, indeed, by the creation of a new type, delicate, graceful and poetic, the expression of an exquisite serenity of mind and tenderness of heart. If there be a modern artist with whom he has certain traits in common, and to whom we may compare him, it is the greatest of contemporary French painters, the author of the frescoes of *Sainte Geneviève*, of the *Sacred Wood, dear to Art and the Muses*, and of the *Hemicycle* in the Sorbonne. It is not only by his choice of titles (*Typha, the Flower of the Reeds*, *The Peaceful Shore*, *Fruitful Earth*) that he shows his affinity with Puvis de Chavannes. The best of his works—all too few in number—have the soothing calm, the dreamy beauty, the ineffable serenity of the French master. I may take, as a typical instance, the fine group of young men known as *The Peaceful Shore*, which I saw again the other day in Lambeaux's studio. The exquisite harmony of the composition, the slender and precise grace of the forms, the ease and truth of the attitudes, and the dreamy and melancholy poetry that breathes from the whole, make up a masterpiece. Throughout this study I have sought to avoid exaggerated estimates of the works I have criticised. I have certainly not abused the term "masterpiece," for I am well aware that masterpieces are scarce, and I have been anxious not to belittle them by including among them works not of the highest quality. I do not use the word lightly here. My essay will have one merit, at least, in my eyes, if it draws attention to this group, a plaster cast of which—the only copy, I believe—is in M. Jef Lambeaux's studio at Brussels.

Although Chainaye has given signal proof of his masterly qualities and poetic temperament in several other works, such as his *Fruitful Earth*, *The Dumb Girl*, and the delightful bust, *San Giovannino*, he is

but little known outside the world of artists. His first essays were greeted with sarcasms and ridicule which seem incomprehensible now, and were rejected by the Brussels Salon in 1884. Thus discouraged, he was forced for a time to abandon sculpture, and earn a living by his pen. He is now one of the most successful journalists in Belgium—a curious development, taking into account the dreamy melancholy of his art. With many of his friends, I hope that this avatar, brilliant as it is, will be but a passing one, and that the tardy admiration the public is beginning to show for his works, will induce the Liègeois sculptor to take up the chisel again, and give form to the poetic figures of his imagination.[1]

Less gifted than M. Chainaye, M. Victor Rousseau is nevertheless an interesting and individual artist. His imagination is original and refined, and his early training as a decorator in plaster has given him great technical facility. His art is full of grace and delicacy, and would be altogether fascinating, were it simpler and more natural. M. Rousseau's passion for elegance sometimes betrays him into a sickliness and exaggeration of form that we should rejoice to see him renounce. He is at his best in the execution of his bas-reliefs, among which we may mention the *Adolescents*, lately exhibited in Brussels, a graceful and original work, the charming *Legend of Orpheus*, and the refined and delicate bust, *Happy*, here reproduced. M. Rousseau's profound knowledge of his craft, and his wonderful dexterity seem to mark him out as a decorative sculptor. His true path lies here, and we do not doubt that in this *genre* he will prove successful, and find the natural outlet for his gifts.

A restless and anxious spirit, alternating between sweetness and violence, now idyllic, now tragic, nervous, vehement and impassioned, such is the gifted Jean-Marie Gaspar, the last sculptor of this group. His imagination is splendid, prolific, inexhaustible. I once saw one of his college exercise-books (he began life by studying as an engineer), full of his first drawings. This astounding book—

[1] Principal works of M. Achille Chainaye (born at Liège, August 26, 1862): *Typha, flower of the Reeds*, *The Archer*, *The Dumb Girl*; in plaster, exhibited at the *Exposition des XX.*, 1884. *The Peaceful Shore*, *Fruitful Earth*, *The Victor*; exhibited at the same, 1885. *San Giovannino*, bronze bust; two bronze medallions; exhibited at the same, 1886. Bust of *Célestin Demblon*. Medallion portraits of *Erasme Raway* and *Charles Goethals*.

for so we must call it, when we remember that Gaspar had never had any academic training in drawing—contained, I remember, the germs of all his art, of all the works he has since produced. There

Happy. Marble Bust. By Victor Rousseau.

were prancing and rearing horses, Titanic battles, fierce and tragic *mêlées*, Homeric struggles ; a chaste, delicious idyll ; then again, rapes, abductions, frenzied combats, tigers creeping with deadly stealthiness upon an invisible prey. These last, which the astonished Lambeaux, scarcely

able to believe they were not copied from some Italian master, made him draw in his presence on the whitewashed walls of the studio, when Gaspar presented himself as a pupil, are marked by wonderful fire and vigour, combined with a remarkable elegance of form. Every line proclaims the master, and if the sculptor could reproduce them, just as he dashed them off on paper, he would unquestionably be the greatest sculptor of his time. But technical difficulties, against which he is ill equipped, having devoted himself to his art late in life, are a daily discouragement to him. The long toil of execution exasperates his eager temperament, and his mind, teeming with new ideas, and wearied with pursuit of a dream it sees clearly, yet cannot at once realise, too often abandons it at the moment when it is about to take definite shape. He has, however, happily overcome these daily difficulties, this drudgery of execution, so far as to produce several works of the greatest beauty. A brief enumeration of these will give some idea of the variety of mood and idea so characteristic of him. In 1889, while still in Lambeaux's studio, he executed the colossal group, *The Abduction*, two nude men, on plunging, infuriated horses, fighting for the possession of a woman, who struggles frantically in their arms. Magnificent in its fiery impetuosity, full of life and passion, broadly and cleverly composed, this group, exhibited at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1889, was awarded a medal by the International Jury. Gaspar, then entirely unknown, was suddenly brought into notice, and received a warm tribute of admiration from his brother artists. But a series of painful incidents in his private history followed closely upon this first success. His art suffered, and it was not until 1892 that he was able to return to his work in earnest. Various sketches then appeared in his studio, delighting his friends, and firing the artist himself, who relies greatly on outside sympathy and encouragement in his struggle with rebellious matter. A *Sappho*, a *Prometheus*, a *Hypnos* almost Greek in its purity, were partly modelled, and then destroyed, by accident or negligence, disasters which seemed to trouble the sculptor little enough. He had other conceptions in his mind, and after long and arduous toil he successfully executed two of these. The first, a curious subject, is an *Indian on Horseback*; a strange, nervous, muscular figure, about half the size of life, representing one of those unfortunate Redskins, who traversed America and travelled all over Europe, in the train of Buffalo Bill. Seen through the medium of Gaspar's

temperament, the "brave" combines the silent melancholy of the exile with the majestic calm of a Roman Emperor.

The bizarre fascination of this statue makes it a work impossible to

Adolescents. By Jean-Marie Gaspar.

forget, but a group he executed at the same time, the chaste and exquisite *Adolescents*, is still more memorable. Two youthful creatures, scarcely more than children as yet, embrace each other with passionate tenderness. There is an ineffable purity in the kiss! We feel that it is the first they

have exchanged, their awakening to a new life. The work seemed familiar to me when I first saw it ; I recognised it as the idyll I had noticed in the old exercise-book, but here the design had gained, instead of losing, in translation. Those who note the charming line of this group, the slender grace of the youthful bodies, the beauty of the attitudes, and the nobility and chastity of the conception, will agree with me that its author is one of the most remarkable of contemporary sculptors.

He seems to have turned over several leaves of his book of studies since. Among his latest works is the study of a couchant tigress, rendered with that refined and nervous energy so characteristic of his work. The beast, soft, languid, with half-closed eyes, has yet an extraordinary suppleness and muscularity, that show her ready to dart out her claws, and spring, cruel and terrible, at the first approach of danger. Another study, of a *Prowling Lion*, is a royally magnificent conception, so lifelike that one almost hears the muffled thud of his mighty paws on the sand, and the formidable roar he is about to utter. A *Panther*, executed for the decoration of the Jardin Botanique at Brussels, sustains Gaspar's high reputation as a graceful and vigorous sculptor of wild beasts, whose only rival in this *genre* among the moderns is the great French master, Barye.

In this brief analysis, I have tried to give some idea of Jean-Marie Gaspar's works, and of the character of his genius. I need not have mentioned his too frequent abandonment of magnificent designs, which he has either destroyed, or never carried further than the first sketch. If I have done so it has been in the hope that Gaspar, calling to mind these neglected creations, and seeing how vividly they are remembered by his friends, will take courage, and, strong in the unanimous admiration felt for him by the sculptors of his country, will draw from the clay forms as exquisite as those seen in his old book of studies, which his master Lambeaux ascribed to the gifted hand of some great Italian.[1]

[1] Principal works of M. Jean-Marie Gaspar (born at Arlon in 1864) : *The Abduction ;* group in plaster, exhibited at the Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1889. *Young Girl on a Rock ;* statuette, 1890. *Figure for a Tomb*, 1892. *An Indian on Horseback ;* exhibited at Scheveningen, 1893. *The Adolescents ;* group in plaster, afterwards carried out in marble ; Salon of Ghent, 1893. *A Couchant Tigress ; A Lion ;* marble, 1894. *A Panther ;* plaster, to be executed in bronze for the Jardin Botanique, Brussels, 1895.

CHAPTER IV

CONSTANTIN MEUNIER AND "SOCIALISTIC" ART

Let me begin by declaring that I am no believer in "Socialistic" art. I use the term because certain clever writers, who make the mistake of trying to combine art and politics, see in Constantin Meunier's work the embodiment of the dreams and aspirations they cherish. Noting the introduction of the workman into art by Meunier, they believe a new epoch to have dawned, an epoch they distinguish as that of "Socialistic art." The supposed mission of this art is, I believe, to glorify labour, to set forth the passive sufferings of the working classes, and by representation of its miseries and misfortunes to forward and facilitate the reforms and ameliorations which these critics hope for. That the tender humanity of Meunier's art should benefit the workman and attract sympathy to him, seems to me no less natural than desirable. But to proclaim that these social problems must have henceforth a predominant importance, that they will, in fact, inspire and govern a new art, that of the coming century, is going too far indeed, and only enthusiasm could engender so erroneous a conception of æsthetics.

Art can be no more socialistic than aristocratic or democratic. It is and must be the expression of Beauty; it exists independently of all sociologic or political considerations. It is subject to laws which it cannot transgress and which it cannot change. It is therefore inexact to say that Constantin Meunier has created a "new art," which will be that of the twentieth century. That which he has created is a new *type*. He has introduced into art the workman, as Millet before him introduced into art the peasant. In both cases art was enriched, but its

nature was not changed. The artistic existence of the Peasant and the Workman is only possible because their creators have subjected them to all the laws of æsthetics.

As may easily be imagined, Meunier had to reckon with violent hostility, both from the public and from artists, at the outset of his career. It is no easy matter to introduce a new type, and to compel its acceptance by artists and connoisseurs, accustomed to specified forms of a more or less conventional character. Meunier fortunately found sympathisers and defenders in certain writers of talent, Messrs. Jules Destrée, Eugène Demolder, Verhaeren, and Mirbeau, who, in a variety of enthusiastic articles, undertook to interpret his art to the public, and contributed largely to his success. The studies of these writers, though marked by certain exaggerations which I cannot accept, make up, however, the most complete and suggestive picture of his genius. They have said all the good it was possible to say of his work, and I cannot give a better idea of the artist than by choosing extracts from their appreciations and so arranging them as to form a complete study.

In a recent article, M. Jules Destrée writes as follows: "It has been chiefly within the last ten years that Meunier has shown how robust and personal an artist he is. It has taken him half his lifetime to conquer himself, and recognise his own individuality. He began his apprenticeship in the studio of the cold and official Fraikin, but soon renounced sculpture for painting. A sojourn at La Trappe bore fruit in a series of grave and austere studies of monks. An impressive picture in the Ghent Museum dates from this period. Another picture, now in the Brussels Museum, *The Peasants' War*, is a clever and spirited work. Somewhat later, on his return from Spain, whither he had been sent to copy a picture by the old Flemish master, Kempeneer, he showed us that picturesque land in an unhackneyed and interesting aspect. His *Tobacco Factory* is a work of great merit. But pictures such as this, though by no means mediocre, had little that was essentially new and distinctive. It was about the year 1877 that Meunier found his true vocation, suddenly recognising what were the aspects of life that moved him most deeply, and in the representation of which his victory was assured. It was in a factory that he first discovered the beauty of human effort in the struggle with iron and fire, the grandiose and sinister

character of certain phases of modern industry. It was then he painted the large canvases : *A Casting in a Steel Factory*, *Miners Coming away from Work*.

"It is Meunier's glory that he went to the workman, as Millet had gone to the peasant, and that he understood and interpreted the suffering greatness of toil. In 1860 Meunier was one of that group of independent painters, De Groux, Rops, Baron, Dubois, Boulanger, and Artan, who initiated the struggle for free art, which the associations known as "The XX" and "Free Æsthetics" have continued. When in time the gallant band was scattered, Meunier needed all his courage to enable him to stand alone, in spite of ridicule and neglect, dedicating his art to the obscure and despised sons of industry. In the world of artists there were none who suspected that there were unexplored domains in this direction. No academy, no professor, no ancient precedent had hinted at their existence, and so powerful is routine that no one could see the elements of beauty to which Meunier's art called attention. Alone, without the encouragement of that sympathy since accorded him, he went to the workshops. He was the first to see the beauty of modern industry, the poetry of the factory, with its fiery life, its roar of wheels and hammers, its incandescent flames shining in blackened and smoky sheds, with strange contrasts of light and shadow. He felt the tragic horror of machinery, mute, inexorable as Fate itself, remorseless grinder of men and conqueror of iron. He saw the sinister coal-fields, with their chimneys and mounds of refuse, their frowning, fantastic scaffoldings in mysterious outline against the sky. No one had ever expressed the poignant melancholy of an industrial landscape as he did. And against this sombre background, where only modern man appears in plastic beauty, Meunier set the workman, sublime in effort as an antique hero ! With the sympathetic insight of a great artist, he was moved by the misery and sufferings of Nature's disinherited ones. A large compassion for the oppressed gives a profoundly human and touching character to all his works.

"Somewhat tardily, a second transformation took place in Meunier's art. He returned suddenly to sculpture, after having deserted it for over a quarter of a century, and, having proved himself a great painter, went on to prove himself a great sculptor. His first essays were

slight and tentative; trifles, a little figure modelled in wax in some interval of leisure, when he was impelled to express some haunting reality, that painting could only render imperfectly; a half-naked puddler, seated in a weary attitude, his only garments a heavy leathern apron, a battered felt hat, and a pair of thick sabots. The statuette was exhibited at one of the Expositions des XX. at Brussels, and attracted

The Puddler. Bronze Statue. By C. Meunier.

much attention. The powerful torso, the herculean arms, the tragic depression of the face, were so lifelike, so intensely real, and yet so full of a noble eurythmy of line, that the work was enthusiastically acclaimed. On the other hand, this sculpture was something so new, so entirely outside the pale of accepted rules and conventions, that it gave rise to the most animated discussions. Since then, however, Meunier

has persisted in this path, in which his art has found full and magnificent development."

In his *Impressions d'Art*, M. Eugène Demolder considers in his turn the modern character of Meunier's art, and thus expresses himself:

"Constantin Meunier has made the modern workman his theme, setting him on very characteristic canvases, or modelling him in vigorous statues. His works are sad and gloomy, violent and tragic, like his models.

"If he has not grasped the whole entity of the multiform modern proletariat, he has, at least, brought out its grandest aspects. He has discovered a tragic beauty in the serfs of civilisation, and has shown that pictures and statues may be inspired by a poetry other than that of classic marbles. Instead of dreaming over the harmonious lines of Apollos and Allegories, he turned his thoughtful, melancholy gaze on the noisy life around him, and found there a vein that had never before been worked. His art will endure, like that of all those who do not despise contemporary things, and who understand that it is the artist's mission to express the essential character of the men, the facts, and the conditions of their own times. True artists are like spiritual flowers, whose rare blossoms fill the corner of earth where they unfold with perfume, but who need the sap they draw from the soil, and the caresses of the ambient light to bring to full perfection the colour of their brilliant corollas. Meunier is the true son of his epoch, and it is a reflection from this epoch which lights up his work."

Turning from the social to the æsthetic aspects of Meunier's art, M. Emile Verhaeven points out some of its characteristics:

"Meunier has," he says, "no affinity with the men of the Renaissance. Those who insist on an artistic ancestry for him, must seek it among the Gothic sculptors. His rugged art is inspired by a deep, a profoundly human pathos. The figures of Christ on wayside crosses in Flanders are, perhaps, the statues he prefers to all others, and their rough sculptors the masters he most admires. His soul is drawn to these forgotten craftsmen. Like theirs, it is primitive and childlike, full of pity, grave, contemplative, sincere.

"Talking to Meunier, one is struck by his constant substitution of

the word 'character,' where one expects the word 'beauty.' Form, according to him, must be, above all things, intense. It is not to be regulated by any fixed principles, by any care for cold correctness or absolute perfection. It is inductive, not deductive. It realises the type through the individual, and attains to synthesis slowly, by a process of wise elimination. It does not deduce every female statue from an ideal Venus of Milo, nor every male statue from an Apollo. The artist must not fear to exaggerate, if so he can express his idea more vividly. It is by following out this method that Meunier has achieved his ideal, giving æsthetic expression to the modern workman, just as the Greeks gave it to the wrestler and the athlete. They, too, founded this expression on a close study of nature and of life, rather than of the model and the pose.

"Emotion, not theatrical, but silent and profound, is the natural outcome of a conception of art so patient and conscientious. It breathes from every work of Meunier's. Take, for instance, his *Glebe*, and his *Fire-damp*, and above all his *Christ*, that pitiful fragment of tortured flesh. . . . Another Flemish sculptor, George Minne, has much the same qualities of pity and sympathy. But whereas he manifests them in dream figures, primitive beings, or creatures of some sphere outside our knowledge, with such power that he seems to create a world of his own, Meunier keeps his eyes steadily fixed on the breathing, suffering life about him. The bowed backs, the toiling arms, the tragic faces he depicts are real and actual. He conceives and executes his figures almost simultaneously, neglecting detail, but seizing masses, and reproducing them to the life. He is sixty years old, and I know no art younger and more robust than his."

Meunier has exhibited in Paris several times. The French art-critics have confirmed the judgment of his fellow-countrymen. From much that has been written on the same lines, we will take the following from a study by M. Octave Mirbeau to complete our picture of the master :

"Constantin Meunier is a remarkable, a mighty artist, of whom we must speak with that respect and delight inspired by the creators of immortal works. There is something peculiarly touching in the career of this master, who is now enthroned on the purest and loftiest summits

of art. A painter by training, he became a sculptor late in life, at an age when others begin to weary of their labours and to think of rest. He, however, embraced a new pursuit with all the ardour, the joy, and the enthusiasm of youth. It was, he told me one day, through the intermediary of the sculptor, Auguste Rodin, that this vocation, so long a mere potentiality, revealed itself to him. He did not know Rodin,

The Glebe. Sketch in bas-relief. By C. Meunier.

but he saw one or two works by the master, and a new light flashed into his soul. It kindled a fire which has burned steadily ever since.

"Meunier accordingly set to work to learn the art of sculpture. His first essays showed him to be almost a master. He did not seek inspiration in cold mythologies and antiquated allegories; he found it in and around him. A passionate student of nature, brought into close contact, in his busy native Belgium, with the world of labour, his ear and his heart always open to the cry of suffering humanity, he continued as sculptor the work he had begun as painter: the grand, the melancholy

epic of the mine. He was born and had grown up in that grim landscape, bounded by the black horizon of factories, under stifling skies, heavy with smoke that never lifts. From childhood he had trodden the soil beneath which thousands of human lives spend themselves in darkness and toil—the soil on which lies the curse of mothers and wives, a graveyard of the living. He had seen the long files of austere, dejected workers descending day by day into the darkness; he had noted the distorted grandeur of torsoes, whose nobility was not that of the ancient gods, and the beauty of gestures and attitudes of toil, majestic in their way as those of heroes with gleaming swords. He gave expression to his dream of pity, beauty, and horror, not by means of dramatic episodes and thrilling presentments, but by the calm and simple rendering of a specialised figure: the worker, wrestling with the monster, Work. This is why Meunier's art, which is beauty in its simplest form, achieves by means of beauty, and beauty alone, without the aid of literature or the trickery of symbolism, a strange intensity of human truth, a violent expression of social terrors.

"Year by year, as Meunier's technical mastery became greater, his hand surer and more supple, his execution more precise, the works he produced took on a greater breadth and amplitude, until at last they acquired that final accent, that stamp of immortality, which proclaims the masterpiece. They culminated in the creation of an old horse, or rather the ghost of an old horse, in which the master gave expression to a whole epopee of human suffering.

"How weary he is, this poor old colliery horse! His hollow sides, barred by his bony ribs, speak of plentiful blows and scanty corn! Yet he has worked hard, poor brute! What heavy, eternal loads he has drawn through the darkness, under the oaths and lashes of the carter. He is still willing, but he can do no more. He knows nothing of frisks and frolics on the open roads, of grassy pastures, of sweet and flowery meadows, which make the skin sleek and satiny, of rest in a stable full of fresh litter, after a day of ploughing in the sunshine. It has always been night for him, in low galleries, the roof of which grazed his back as he toiled along; night, broken only by alarming flashes as of death-stars, from lanterns, gleaming on blackened faces, rising out of the Plutonian darkness from time to time, like souls in torment—night, with its thousand

panting breasts! His legs are bent at the knees, and swollen at the fetlocks. With nerveless flanks, and flaccid hocks, he rests on his crumpled hoof, after the manner of tired beasts. His neck, with its scanty mane, his shoulders, marked by the collar, make almost a straight line with his stiffened hind-quarters, and passing along the spine, it divides at the meagre croup, into a double apophyge. His head hangs a little to one side, his ears droop, his jaw falls. His eye is dim, mournful and gentle, veiled as it were by a mist of darkness. Tears have left their channels on his skin. He is motionless; not a muscle, not a hair stirs; spent and helpless, he will only lie down to die.

"One of the finest touches of observation in this study is the face Meunier has given to this old battered carcase of a horse. Its pathos is extraordinary. For the faces of old and suffering beasts are like those of old people, faces made up of misery and resignation, tragic faces, in which may be read, better than in a book, the injustice that presses on the hard lives of the poor. Such is the magic of the masterpiece, that, without any sentimentality or rhetoric, eloquent only by its form, this little bronze conjures up the whole life of the mine, the terrible mine, that grinds and devours so many of those human creatures, to whom society denies bread, as men denied this horse his provender. And thought travels with deep depression, not unmixed with anger, from tortured beast to martyred man, the victim of a guilty civilisation that protects only the prosperous. This old colliery horse sums up the whole tragedy.

"The quality in Meunier's art which most appeals to me, is its simplicity. It is never disfigured by violent or exaggerated gestures; it ignores what is known as *subject.* The artist has a horror of loquacity and of anecdote, which belittle all they touch in art. The poignant emotion that takes possession of you, and troubles heart and brain as you look at his figures, is spontaneous; it is not aroused by surroundings and accessories proper to the sentiment the master wishes to express, but from the completeness of the figure and the harmony of its action. By the most simple methods, and without much thought of composition, apparently, Meunier achieves the highest expression of which a work of art is capable, a quality which assures the immortality of his masterpieces.

panting breasts! His legs are bent at the knees, and swollen at the fetlocks. With nerveless flanks, and flaccid hocks, he rests on his crumpled hoof, after the manner of tired beasts. His neck, with its scanty mane, his shoulders, marked by the collar, make almost a straight line with his stiffened hind-quarters, and passing along the spine, it divides at the meagre croup, into a double apophyge. His head hangs a little to one side, his ears droop, his jaw falls. His eye is dim, mournful and gentle, veiled as it were by a mist of darkness. Tears have left their channels on his skin. He is motionless; not a muscle, not a hair stirs; spent and helpless, he will only lie down to die.

"One of the finest touches of observation in this study is the face Meunier has given to this old battered carcase of a horse. Its pathos is extraordinary. For the faces of old and suffering beasts are like those of old people, faces made up of misery and resignation, tragic faces, in which may be read, better than in a book, the injustice that presses on the hard lives of the poor. Such is the magic of the masterpiece, that, without any sentimentality or rhetoric, eloquent only by its form, this little bronze conjures up the whole life of the mine, the terrible mine, that grinds and devours so many of those human creatures, to whom society denies bread, as men denied [illegible] And thought travels with deep depression, not unmixed with anger, from tortured beast to martyred man, the victim of a guilty civilisation that protects only the prosperous. This old colliery horse sums up the whole tragedy.

"The quality in Meunier's art which most appeals to me, is its simplicity. It is never disfigured by violent or exaggerated gestures; it ignores what is known as *subject*. The artist has a horror of loquacity and of anecdote, which belittle all they touch in art. The poignant emotion that takes possession of you, and troubles heart and brain as you look at his figures, is spontaneous; it is not aroused by surroundings and accessories proper to the sentiment the master wishes to express, but from the completeness of the figure and the harmony of its [illegible] By the most simple methods, and without much thought of [illegible], apparently, Meunier achieves the highest expression of which a work of art is capable, a quality which assures the immortality of his masterpieces.

C. Meunier, Fecit.

Walter L. Colls Ph. Sc

Industry ~ Part of an Alto-relievo.

"This quality is very striking in *Grief*, a study of a miner's wife, taken from the famous group, *Fire-damp*. It is a woman, bending forward to look at the dead body of her husband, killed by an explosion in the mine. Here we do not see the cause of her sorrow; the woman only appears. She does not express her emotion by any gesture; she neither tears her hair, nor wrings her hands. She stands quite quietly, leaning forward, her arms hanging by her side, her eyes fixed and mournful, in the motionless horror caused by the catastrophe. Yet it would be difficult to imagine a more heartrending suggestion of sorrow."

The enthusiasm of his critics drew attention to his works; success soon came to him, and each year witnessed fresh triumphs. Appointed Director of the Academy of Louvain, he was commissioned by the town to execute the monument to Father Damien. The museum of Brussels bought his bronze statue of *The Puddler*, and a few years later, the most famous of his groups, *Fire-damp*. Another of his statues, *The Mower*, adorns the Jardin Botanique at Brussels, and in Paris, where his reputation seems to be steadily increasing, the Luxembourg Museum has bought two of his finest bas-reliefs, *The Glebe*, in 1892, and in 1893, the bronze of *Puddlers at the Furnace*. The Belgian Government has commissioned him, jointly with M. Charles van der Stappen, to design the monumental decorations for the Jardin Botanique at Brussels, and in a few years' time we may hope to see the completion of this important work, to which nearly all the sculptors of Belgium will have contributed. Whilst directing the general scheme of this work, Meunier dreams of another, hardly less imposing, which will be an entirely personal creation. His idea is to execute a colossal monument to *Labour*, for which he has already designed four bas-reliefs. One is to represent Industry, another Agriculture, a third Commerce, and a fourth Art. This would indeed be a work truly characteristic of his creative genius, and we earnestly hope that Meunier, himself a worker *par excellence*, may pay his great tribute to Work in the beautiful and grand form he has conceived.[1]

[1] Principal works of M. Constantin Meunier: *A Puddler;* wax. *A Dock Horse;* Antwerp; wax, 1885. *The Hammerman;* Paris, 1886. *Lassitude;* Ghent, 1886. *The Puddler;* bronze statue, in the Brussels Museum, 1887. *The Victim;* fragment in plaster, bronzed, Brussels, 1887. *A Dock-labourer;* statuette in bronze, in the Luxembourg Museum, Paris. *The Hammerman.* Ibid. *The Glass-blower,*

A Boulogne Fisherman; Paris, 1890. *Fire-damp;* a group in bronze, in the Brussels Museum. *The Drinking-trough*, a decorative fragment; Brussels, 1890. *Ecce Homo;* statuette in bronze. *An Old Colliery Horse;* bronze, Antwerp, 1891. *A Miner;* bronze, Ghent, 1892. *The Mower;* bronze, in the Jardin Botanique, Brussels. *The Glebe;* in the Luxembourg Museum; Paris, 1892. Statues for the façade of Notre Dame de la Chapelle; Brussels, 1893. Monument dedicated by the town of Louvain to the memory of Father Damien; Louvain, 1893. *Puddlers at the Furnace;* bas-relief in bronze, in the Luxembourg Museum; Paris, 1893. Design for the decoration of the Jardin Botanique, Brussels; Brussels, 1893. *The Prodigal Son;* plaster group, 1894. *Harvest;* bas-relief in plaster, 1894. *The Port;* bas-relief in plaster, 1895. *Industry;* bas-relief, 1895.

An exhibition of Constantin Meunier's works will be held in Paris this winter at Bing's, and possibly afterwards in London.

CHAPTER V

IVORY CARVING—CONCLUSION

THIS study of the magnificent development of Belgian sculpture during the last few years would be incomplete, if I omitted to add a

Ivory Head of a Child. By Jules Lagaë.

brief reference to the revival of a branch of art, which, in modern times, has been mistakenly regarded as a mere accessory of sculpture. I refer to ivory carving, and chryselephantine sculpture.

Chryselephantine carving, which the Greeks practised, not as an art subordinate to sculpture proper, but as one requiring all the qualities necessary to monumental and decorative work, rapidly decayed after the Greek era, and barely survived the Byzantine epoch. The art of ivory carving was longer lived. In the middle ages it produced those delicate and elaborate works, full of faith and imagination, which we admire in museums. Somewhat neglected during the Renaissance, it enjoyed a brilliant period of revival in the seventeenth century, a revival due to the skill with which it was practised by three Belgian sculptors, Bossuit, François Duquesnoy, and Luc Faidherbe. Declining once more after their time, neglected by sculptors, and little appreciated by the public, the art seemed all but lost and forgotten, when special circumstances brought it once more into vogue in Belgium.

The development of the commercial relations between Belgium and the Congo State resulted in the consignment of large quantities of ivory to Antwerp. Certain Belgian explorers, who had friends among our sculptors, presented them with pieces of ivory. These artists were all agreed as to the excellence of the material for plastic purposes, finding it not only admirable in colour, but susceptible of an exquisite smoothness and polish. In 1894, accordingly, the administrators of the Congo State, anxious to increase the interest of the Congolais department in the Antwerp Exhibition, adopted the wise and artistic expedient of offering blocks of ivory to Belgian sculptors, on condition that the works they executed in the material should be exhibited in the Congo section.

The result surpassed all expectations. The importance of this new departure was still more fully realised when the various ivories were exhibited towards the end of the year at the "Cercle Artistique et Littéraire" at Brussels. In the Antwerp Exhibition they had been lost, to some extent, among the variety of exhibits by which they were surrounded.

Some of our best sculptors, outrivalling one another in skill and science, achieved in this single exhibition a complete revival of an art that had been looked upon as extinct. M. Paul de Vigne, in his admirable bust of *Psyche* (reproduced at the beginning of this study), M. Vinçotte, in his bust of *Medusa*, a wonderful study of cold cruelty and hatred, M. Lagaë in his *Head of a Child*, graceful and *bellina*, as the Florentines

Minerva. Bust in ivory and bronze. By J. Dillens.

Allegretto. Ivory Statuette. By J. Dillens.

would say, showed not only their accustomed mastery, but the perfection of ivory as a sculpturesque medium. Though less perfect than these, the contributions of Messrs. Samuel and Craco were of much interest, and attracted a good deal of notice. And, as might have been expected, seeing that here technical knowledge and manual perfection were specially necessary, M. Julien Dillens was *facile princeps* in the works which he sent to this exhibition, a *Minerva*, with a golden helmet, an *Allegretto*, two commemorative bas-reliefs, and the charming little *figurine*, presented to the architect Jamaer, in memory of the completion of the King's Palace. Messrs. Dillens and Vinçotte showed in this exhibition what exquisite effects might be won by the combination of precious metals with ivory. This revival of chryselephantine sculpture seems to me the most interesting feature of the movement, and it is to this above all that I am anxious to call attention. It is much to be hoped that our sculptors, having attained to such perfection in works of small dimensions, may be encouraged by the State and by private collectors to undertake monumental and decorative works in this *genre*, which would enrich our museums and public buildings, and relieve the cold monotony which too often characterises them.

I have now completed my study of the Renaissance of sculpture in Belgium. In these notices, which I have made as impartial as I could, I have discharged some small portion of the debt I owe our sculptors for the revelations of art and beauty their works have been to me. An idea which has occurred to me during the writing of this study may serve as a practical conclusion to my analysis. It is the duty of the Belgian Government to encourage, and make known in foreign lands, this Renaissance of a national art. This could hardly be done more efficaciously, I think, than by organising a general exhibition of Belgian sculpture in London, where its achievements are almost unknown. I heartily hope this idea may some day be carried out, for the results would be not only beneficial to Belgian sculptors, but to the future of all modern sculpture.

INDEX

Antwerp, 8, 13, 16, 17, 34, 39, 40, 74
Artan (painter), 64
Aubert, Blaton, 46
Auderghem, 13
Austria, Margaret of, 14

Baerse, Jacques de la, 12
Baron (painter), 64
Barye, 7, 61
Bay, De, 21
Beaugrant, Guyot de, 15
Becker, Pierre de, 13, 14
Blondeel, Lancelot, 15
Boendael, 13
Boghen, Louis van, 14
Bohemia, 16
Bologna, Giovanni da, 16, 40
Boulanger (painter), 64
Bourbon, Margaret of, 14
Bouré (sculptor), 22
Brabant, 8, 12, 13
Broeucq, Jacques de, 15, 16
Brou (Bourg-en-Bresse), 14, 16
Bruges, 13, 26
Brussels, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16, 19, 21, 22, 26, 28, 29, 30, 46, 48, 56, 57, 65, 71
Burgos, 16
Burgundy, 12
  „ Duke of, 12
  „ Charles the Bold of, 13
  „ Margaret of, 12
  „ Mary of, 13
  „ Philip the Bold of, 12, 16

Canova, 7
Carpeaux, 7, 38, 39
Cattier (sculptor), 22
Chainaye, Achille, 55, 56
Charlier, Guillaume, 30
Chavannes, Puvis de, 56
Christiern II. (of Denmark), 13
Colonna, Cardinal, 18
Colyns, Alexander, 14, 15
Congo State, 74
Coster, Charles de, 5, 31
Craco (sculptor), 78

David, Jacques Louis, 18
Demolder, Eugène, 63, 66
Destrée, Jules, 63
Devillez, Louis, 53, 54 (note)
Dijon, 12
Dillens, Julien, 37, 44—49, 78
Dinant, 10—12, 16
Dodd, M., 10
Donatello, 13, 55
Duquesnoy, François, 17, 18, 53, 74

Egas, Anequin des, 16
Evere (near Brussels), 34

Faidherbe, Luc, 17, 18, 74
Fassin (sculptor), 21
Fiesole, Mino da, 55
Flanders, 8, 12, 53, 66
Flaxman, 7
Florence, 25, 55
Floris, Corneille, 13, 14
Foulques (monk), 9
Fraikin (sculptor), 21, 63

Gaspar, Jean-Marie, 55, 57, 61
Geefs, G., 21
Germany, 16
Ghent, 13, 63
Ghiberti, 55
Godecharles, Gilles Lambert, 18
Granada, 16
Groux, De (painter), 64

Hackendover, 13
Hainault, 8, 12

Heerenthals, 13
Hellin, Canon of Liège, 9
Hugues, Friar, 10

Innsbrück, 14
Ixelles, 46, 47

Jamaer (architect), 78
Jonghelinckx, Jacques, 13, 14
Jordaens, 38, 42

Lagaë, Jules, 38, 49—53, 74
Lalaing, Jacques de, 34
Lambeaux, Jef, 37—44, 56, 58, 61
Léau, 13, 14
Lemonier, Camille, 21, 27
Liège, 8, 9
Limburg, 8
Lobbes, Abbey of, 9
Loretto, 18
Louvain, 12, 13, 71
Luxembourg, 8

Marchal, E., 6 (note), 11
Margy (the brothers), 17
Marly, 17
Matsys, Quentin, 38
Maximilian, Emperor, 14, 15
Mechlin, 12, 18
Mérimée, Prosper, 16
Meunier, Constantin, 23, 31, 62—72
Meyt, Conrad, 14
Michelangelo, 38, 43
Millet, Jean François, 62, 64
Mirbeau, Octave, 63, 67
Mons, 15

Namur, 8, 9
Nivelles, 9

Oignies, Abbey of, 10

Paris, 25, 40, 42, 71
Patras, Lambert, 9, 10, 11, 13
Philip II., 13
Pisano, Niccola, 9, 13
Pistoja, 46
Poppon (monk), 9
Pradier (sculptor), 7

Robbia, The, 55
Rodin, Auguste, 68
Rome, 25
Rops (painter), 64
Roskilde, 13
Rossellino, 53
Rouen, 16
Rousseau, Victor, 30, 55, 57
Rubens, 17, 38, 42

Saint Trond, 12
Samuel (sculptor), 30, 31, 78
Savoy, Duke of, 14
Settignano, Desiderio da, 55
Seville, 16
Simonis (sculptor), 21, 22, 28
Sluter, Claus, 12, 13
Spain, 16
Stappen, Charles van der, 24, 27—30,32
Stavelot, Abbey of, 9

Taye, M. de, 25
Termonde, 12
Thorwaldsen, 7, 14
Tirlemont, 10
Toledo, 16
Tournai, 9, 11, 12, 14
Trianon, 17

Uccle, 44
Upsala, 13
Urban VII., 18

Valencia, 16
Valladolid, 16
Vasa, Gustavus, 13
Vaulsort, Abbey of, 9
Verbruggen, Henri Francois, 16
Verhaeren, Emile, 63, 66
Versailles, 17
Vigne, Paul de, 25—29, 32, 55, 74
Vinçotte, Thomas, 24, 31—33, 78
Vriendt, De, see Floris.

Waagen, Dr., 11
Werve, Nicholas van der, 12, 13
Winne, Liévin de, 26
Worms, 14

S. Michael casting down Satan.

GERARD DAVID

PAINTER AND ILLUMINATOR

By

W. H. JAMES WEALE

Keeper of the National Art Library.

LONDON
SELLEY AND CO. LIMITED, ESSEX STREET, STRAND
NEW YORK, MACMILLAN AND CO.
1895

GERARD DAVID

PAINTER AND ILLUMINATOR

By

W. H. JAMES WEALE

Keeper of the National Art Library.

LONDON
SEELEY AND CO. LIMITED, ESSEX STREET, STRAND
NEW YORK, MACMILLAN AND CO.
1895

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATES

PAGE

S. Michael casting down Satan. Imperial Gallery, Vienna . . . . . *Frontispiece*

The Mystic Marriage of S. Katherine. National Gallery . . . . . *to face* 16

A Canon with his Patron Saints. National Gallery . . . . . ,, ,, 18

The Madonna and Virgin Saints. Rouen Museum . . . . . ,, ,, 32

ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

The Judgement of Cambyses. Town Museum, Bruges 11

The Baptism of Christ. Museum of the Academy, Bruges 21

Exterior of the Shutters of the Picture of "The Baptism of Christ" 25

The Virgin and Infant Saviour holding a bunch of grapes.

Mary Magdalene Cordier with her daughter and Patron Saint.

Altarpiece for the Gild of the Drie Sanctinnen, by an unknown artist. Brussels Museum 29

Exterior of the Shutters of the picture of "S. Michael" 37

S. Sebastian.

Female Saint with a Boy.

The Marriage Feast at Cana. Louvre 43

The Blessed Virgin and Infant Christ. Miniature from Triptych, by the wife of Gerard David. Mr. Willett's Collection 49

ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

PAGE

Wings of Triptych, by the wife of Gerard David. Mr. Willett's Collection . . 53
S. Katherine.
S. Barbara.

SS. Katherine, Cecilia, Barbara, and other Virgin Saints. Grimani Breviary . . 57

S. Anthony. Grimani Breviary 59

S. John the Baptist. Grimani Breviary 61

S. Mary Magdalene. Grimani Breviary 63

S. Christopher. Grimani Breviary 65

S. Michael. Grimani Breviary 67

S. Francis of Assisi. Grimani Breviary 69

GERARD DAVID

CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE AND EARLY WORKS

The schools of painting that flourished in the Netherlands during the fifteenth century produced a great number of artists of merit,—of artists whose works, in all respects, bear comparison with those of their contemporaries of other lands and, in some, are superior to any. Our knowledge of these schools is still very incomplete, but it has been considerably increased of late, and the names of Van Eyck, Hans Memlinc, Peter Cristus, Roger Van der Weyden, and Dirk Bouts, almost unknown fifty years ago, are now, thanks to the works of Kügler, Waagen, Cavalcaselle, Conway, and others, and to the reproductions of the Arundel Society, tolerably familiar at least to that portion of the public, happily ever-increasing, who take an interest in the arts of the middle ages.

Of late years it has become the fashion to call these artists the Early Flemish painters; an unfortunate misnomer, as the title of Netherlandish, formerly in use, was far more correct. As a matter of fact all the great painters of the fifteenth century came from that part of the Low Countries situated on the right of the Scheldt. Many were Walloons; suffice it to mention now, Roger de la Pasture of Tournay, better known as Van der Weyden, Simon Marmion of Valenciennes, John Gossaert of Maubeuge, Joachim Patenir of Dinant, Henry Bles of Bouvignes, John Prevost of Mons, and John Bellegambe of Douay; but the greatest of all came from Brabant, Holland, Guelders, and the banks of the Maas, while Flanders, properly so called, hardly produced any artist of note.

True, many of these painters settled in Flanders, but they did not come thither to learn their art; the records of the towns in which they took up their abode show that they were already masters, who came to practise, not to learn. Bruges and Ghent at that time offered great facilities for the sale of works of art. Not only were there rich merchants from every civilised country living in these towns, but the concourse of strangers to the great annual fairs held therein was enormous, and the sales of paintings and miniatures brought in very considerable sums. To Bruges and Ghent then, many artists were attracted; first John van Eyck, who was taken into the Duke of Burgundy's regular employ, Peter Cristus his pupil, Hans Memlinc, and the artist to whose life and works the present monograph is devoted. These great masters found in Bruges and Ghent assistants to grind and mix their colours, but no pupils of whom they were able to make painters—the real Fleming to this day has no eye for colour. But to return to our immediate subject; up to the year 1861, nothing whatever was known of Gerard David. His name was not to be found in any dictionary of artists nor in any modern work on Netherlandish art. Guicciardini, in his *Description of the Low Countries* published in 1582, gives a list of the leading artists then living and of their predecessors; amongst these he mentions:

"Simon Beninc, an excellent illuminator in vermilion, as also Gerard, known as among the best illuminators, and Lancelot, marvellous for his skill in painting fires to the life and naturally, as in his picture of the sack and burning of Troy; and these three were all natives of Bruges."

This is the earliest mention of David that we have, and brief as the passage is, it is incorrect, for not one of these three artists was born or bred in Bruges. Simon Beninc was a native of Antwerp, and only came to settle in Bruges after he had thoroughly learnt his art, and Lancelot Blondeel was a native of Poperinghe, who settled in Bruges on his return from Italy. Vasari in his chapter on artists of the Low Countries, says: "That you may know something of the miniaturists of these countries, people say that the following were excellent artists: Marinus of Siressa, Luke Hurembout of Ghent, Simon Beninck of Bruges, and Gerard." And the Flemish art-historian Van Mander, who had long lived at Bruges, and whose *History and Lives of Netherlandish and German*

Painters was published at Alckmaer in 1604, says, "There was formerly another Gerard, of Bruges, as to whom I have no information, save that Peter Pourbus was known to esteem him highly as an excellent artist." The last to mention him was Sanderus, who quotes Guicciardini, Vasari and Van Mander, and adds that he had a pupil whose name was Adrian Isebrant.

This is absolutely all that I have been able to find in books about Gerard David. His memory had altogether died out in Bruges. His pictures were attributed to others, notwithstanding that they have a distinctive character of their own. It was reserved to me to restore the name of this great artist to its proper place in the history of Low Country art. My first discoveries were made in 1860 and published in the Catalogue of the Museum of the Academy of Bruges in August, 1861; they have since been considerably increased, and Gerard David's name has become well known in the art world, and his works sought after so eagerly that picture-dealers have, with their usual unscrupulousness, taken to ascribing to him works of very inferior character. Not only that, but writers who ought to have known better have added to the confusion by mixing him up with other painters bearing the same Christian name. Thus Waagen in 1863 asserts his conviction that Gerard David and Gerard Horebout are one and the same person;[1] and Crowe tries to make out that Gerard, son of John David of Oudewater, must be identical with Gerard of S. John's of Harlem.[2]

Gerard, son of John David, was born at Oudewater, a town in the province of South Holland, early in the second half of the fifteenth century. He came to Bruges at the end of 1483, or early in 1484. On the 14th of January of that year he was admitted as master painter into the Gild of Saints Luke and Eligius, and paid the usual entrance fee of £6. At that time he was most probably a bachelor; at all events, he had no children; the register mentions this fact, because the sons of members of the Gild, born after their fathers' admission, only contributed to the gild-burse, on their inscription as masters, half the sum paid by strangers.

[1] "Je suis convaincu que ce personnage ne fait qu'un avec Gérard Horebout."—*Manuel de l'Histoire de la Peinture*, Bruxelles, 1863, tom. III., p. 308.

[2] *The Early Flemish Painters*, London, 1872, pp. 300, 301.

It is not known who was Gerard's master, nor where he learnt his art, but it was most probably at Harlem. Albert of Oudewater, his pupil Gerard of S. John's of Leiden, and Dirk Bouts of Harlem were all trained in that city, the painters of which, according to testimony cited by Van Mander, surpassed in landscape painting all other Netherlandish artists. At present we only know one authentic picture of Albert's, *The Raising of Lazarus* in the Berlin Museum ; this has an architectural background ; two of Gerard of S. John's, *A Pietà* and the *Burning of Saint John the Baptist's Bones* by order of Julian the Apostate, in the Vienna Gallery ; these are painted in a brownish tone, and are remarkable for the great care with which the landscape backgrounds are painted. Bouts' paintings are numerous and well known ; the colour, laid on with a full brush, is generally bright ; the landscapes are distinguished for their beauty. David's earlier pictures make it pretty clear that he must have been trained, if not by either of the two last, at least by some painter of the same school. His later pictures show that he was influenced by Hans Memlinc, who was at the height of his talent when Gerard settled in Flanders. At this time Bruges was in full prosperity, but its palmy days were coming to an end. On the 31st January, 1488, its citizens broke out in revolt against Maximilian, whose person they seized. They shut him up first in the Craenenburg on the market-place, then on the 28th of February removed him to the mansion built shortly before by John de Gros, where he remained in confinement until the 16th of May. It was in this mansion that Gerard David executed the first work of which I have found mention. To guard against Maximilian's escape strong gratings of wrought iron had been placed before the windows of this mansion. Gerard was employed to paint these in order to render them less apparent to the royal captive ; for this work he received £2 10*s*. Some days after Maximilian's imprisonment, the deposed burgomaster, the judge Peter Lanchals, and other members of the magistracy, accused of corruption and malversation, were put to the torture, condemned to death, and executed. Gerard was in the city, and may have witnessed some at least of the striking scenes that were then enacted. From the new magistrates elected by the three members of Flanders in the name of the King of France as suzerain of Flanders, Gerard received a commission to paint for the justice-room in

the town-hall two panels that should recall to the sitting magistrates that they must be honest and impartial. Instead, however, of painting the history of Lanchals, Gerard took for his theme an analogous subject originally recorded by Herodotus, but which he doubtless drew from the then much better known works of Valerius Maximus.

The story runs as follows :—Sisamnes, one of the royal judges of Egypt, having been bribed to give an unjust judgement, Cambyses, the king, had him strangled and flayed, and had the chair on which he had sat when pronouncing judgement covered with his skin. He then named Sisamnes' son judge in his father's place, and recommended him to remember on whose seat he was placed to administer justice.

One of the two panels represents the corruption of the judge and the judgement of Cambyses ; the other, the flaying of Sisamnes and the administration of justice by his son. Each panel measures 5 ft. 11 in. in height by 4 ft. 8 in. in breadth. In the first Cambyses, who, attended by his court, has entered the hall of justice, is ordering the unjust judge to be seized. His corruption is indicated in the background, where, at the door of his dwelling, he is receiving a bag of money from a man. Cambyses, the first finger of his right hand laid on the thumb of his left, is apparently insisting on the truth of the accusation. Other judges and persons of distinction stand around the king. The unjust judge, laid hold of by a vulgar-looking man, has a terror-stricken countenance. He wears a red, fur-lined robe over a black underdress ; in his right hand he holds his head-cover of blue cloth, which he has taken off on the entrance of the king ; his left rests on the arm of his seat. Behind him is stretched a cloth of honour, of brown bordered with black, suspended by straps to rings in the wall. To the right and left of the justice seat are two oval medallions in camaieu with allegorical subjects, remarkable as being the earliest instance of the occurrence, in Netherlandish pictures, of pagan sculpture. The one represents Abundance seated on a chair of the kind called διφρος in Greek ; behind her stands a column with a dog reposing on its summit, and an inscription, not readable, on its face ; a man, armed with a club, offers the woman an apple. I have not been able to make out the exact subject intended to be portrayed. The other medallion represents a man seated on a stone and bound to a tree with his hands tied behind him ; on his left is Venus holding a violin and

a cupid presenting her a bow. Above the cloth of honour is the date 1498, and still higher a bracket on which are seated two amorini holding two wreaths of foliage and fruit, the other ends of which are drawn to the sides by two groups of amorini seated on the capitals of two porphyry columns, from which shorter columns rise with amorini fighting on their summits. On the wall above the garlands are escucheons with the arms of Philip the Handsome and Joan of Aragon.

The scene is represented as taking place in an open gallery or portico looking on to a square, which bears a general resemblance to the square of S. John at Bruges, but with modifications in the details.

The figures in this picture vary from 35 to 38 inches in height. Cambyses wears a robe of dark blue and gold brocade, lined with fur, and a mantle of blue velvet with ermine collar and trimmings, white hose, sandals, and a red velvet cap bordered with fur and encircled with a rich gold crown. Among the nineteen persons who form his suite is an officer with a steel helmet, a coat of mail, cuirass, and a short sleeveless mantle with a winged female figure terminating in arabesques. On the lower edge of his mantle are some letters which, however, offer no sense, and are only an imitation of the borders of the Italian reproductions of Saracenic stuffs. On the helmet are reflected the church of Saint John and other buildings. Behind this officer and on the extreme right of the foreground is a man about thirty years of age, whose head only is seen. This is the earliest portrait of the painter we have. In the immediate front is a white hound with a gilt collar, and a poodle shaved to the skin with the exception of its head and legs.

On the second panel, in the square and not far from the portico in which the previous scene was laid, is a long massive table on which Sisamnes is stretched naked, his right leg and arm being fastened by cords to the leg and cross-bar of the table. The arms are further secured by iron staples placed under the pits. Four executioners are engaged in flaying him, and the contracted features of his face show the acute pain he is suffering. One of the executioners, in a blue blouse, confined at the waist by a white scarf, and holding the knife in his mouth, is flaying the left leg of the unhappy judge. Another is bisecting lengthways the skin of his left arm, which an assistant is pulling straight by means of a cord fastened round his waist. A third, at the head of the table, is laying

The Judgement of Cambyses. Town Museum at Bruges.

open the breast, while the fourth is busy over the right arm. The king, sceptre in hand, surrounded by his court, looks on at the execution of his sentence. One of the ten noblemen who compose his suite has a goshawk seated on his wrist. On the right of the immediate foreground is a poodle scratching its ear. Under the table lie the judge's clothes. On the left background in the portico is seen the son of Sisamnes seated in the place of justice with his father's skin behind him, in lieu of a cloth of honour; around him are ten persons, one of whom is putting his hand into his purse as if about to offer its contents to the judge, who appears to refuse it. Above the building are two escucheons bearing the arms of the counts of Flanders and of the town of Bruges. On the right at the window of a neighbouring house is a woman looking down at the scene being enacted in the place below. Beyond a wall in the background is seen a park with trees in the shade of which reposes a stag. The principal figures are 37 inches high; those in the background 12 inches.

These two panels are vigorously painted in a brownish tone with wonderful finish. They are well composed, though the foreground of the first picture is a little overcharged. The backgrounds are excellent, and the form and foliage of the trees in the park faithfully rendered. The figures are well drawn, most of the heads having a great deal of character and the hands being admirably modelled.

The flaying of a man is doubtless by no means a pleasant thing to look at, but it was not the painter who chose the subject. If however we consider the end which the magistrates aimed at in having these pictures painted, and the place in which they were to be hung, we cannot hesitate in saying that Gerard executed perfectly the commission entrusted to him. For the two pictures he received £14 10*s.*; £4 in 1488, £2 in 1490, and then after arbitration in 1498, £8 10*s.*, making in all £14 10*s.* The frames cost 9*s.*, and when the pictures were hung 3*s.* 4*d.* was given to Gerard's assistants and workmen. These pictures used to be attributed to Antony Claeissens and the date on the first of them read 1598; by others they have been assigned to Bartholomew of Milan, to John Gossaert of Maubeuge, and to Gerard Horebout of Ghent.[1]

[1] These two pictures were taken to Paris by the French in 1794, brought back to Bruges in 1815, and placed in the Town Museum. Copies of both, originally in the Town house at Nieuport, were in the Bernal collection; a later copy, with variations, of the *Flaying of Sisamnes* is still preserved in the Law Courts at Bruges.

In a short time Gerard rose to honours in his craft ; he was a member of its council in 1488, again in 1495–96 and 1498–99. In the year 1496 or shortly after, he married Cornelia, daughter of James Cnoop the younger by his first wife Katherine. This James Cnoop was a goldsmith and a native of Middleburg in Zeeland, who had settled at Bruges, and was at that time dean of his craft. I shall have occasion to speak of Cornelia later on. In 1501–2 Gerard held the honourable position of dean of his craft.

David appears to have been a pious and charitable man. In 1508 he became a member of the confraternity of Our Lady of the Dry Tree in the church of the Grey Friars. In 1509 he painted gratuitously the altar-piece now at Rouen for the Carmelite nuns of Sion at Bruges, and later on when these nuns were in need, he generously lent them £10 free of interest on condition that they should return it when requested to do so ; this they did on 7th June 1523 when Gerard was dangerously ill. He died on the 13th of August following, and was buried in the church of Our Lady beneath the tower ; his tombstone, which bore his arms and those of his wife, disappeared when the church was repaved in the early part of the present century. His only child, Barbara, was already married when he died. His widow married again in 1529 and left Bruges.

CHAPTER II

GERARD DAVID'S OTHER PAINTINGS

About 1501, or perhaps a little earlier, Gerard was employed to paint a picture for the altar of Saint Katherine in the chapel of S. Anthony in the collegiate church of S. Donatian at Bruges. His patron on this occasion was one of the canons, Richard de Visch van der Capelle, who had held the office of cantor since 1463, and was highly esteemed for his knowledge of canon law. He belonged to a distinguished Flemish family, which seems to have had considerable art taste, and several of whose members were buried in this chapel, where he himself was laid to rest in 1511.

The scene of the picture is laid in a garden, on the terrace of which the Madonna is seated on a metal faldstool covered with scarlet drapery. Behind her, and between two columns of reddish marble, hangs a cloth of honour of gold and dark blue brocade. She is attired in a plain dark greenish-blue dress, gathered at the neck and lined at the wrists with grey fur, and an ample blue mantle bordered with light gold embroidery. A double band of pearls confines her long wavy hair, which falls in masses over her shoulders, while above her head is suspended a rich jewel set with precious stones and pearls. With interlaced hands she supports the Infant Christ, who, enveloped from the waist downwards in fine cambric drapery, is seated on her right knee. His left hand clasps a coral rosary which is hanging from his right shoulder, and he turns, with right arm outstretched, to give the mystic ring to S. Katherine, who leans forward on bended knee to receive it. She is splendidly attired in a dress of crimson and gold brocade, lined with ermine, and wears a richly jewelled crown. On the ground, at her left, are the instruments of her martyrdom —the broken wheel of torture with a sword passed through it. On her

right, in the foreground, kneels her votary, Richard de Visch van der Capelle, in furred cassock and full-sleeved lawn surplice, with an almuce over his left arm. On the pavement in front of him lies his cantor's staff, a fourteenth-century *tau* of silver gilt surmounted by a group representing the Most Holy Trinity adored by a monk and a cardinal, given to the church by Canon Nicholas de Bouchoute in 1337.[1] Beside the staff are a Breviary with gold clasps and a blue velvet cover and a black cap, while in the immediate foreground reposes a greyhound with a collar composed of bells and an enamelled escucheon bearing the canon's arms : *argent*, semée of crosses treflées, at the feet fitched, two barbel haurient addorsed, all *sable*, De Visch ; in chief an inescucheon *or*, charged with a chevron *gules*, Van Axele. To the left of the Madonna are seated S. Barbara and S. Mary Magdalene. The dress of the former, of brown and gold brocade with a gold floral pattern, is cut square showing an underbodice of cloth of gold embroidered with two peacocks pecking at ornamental foliage issuing from a Renascence vase ; the sleeves are large and of shot lilac and blue material. She wears a crimson cap and an enamelled and jewelled crown bearing her emblematic tower in front, and is meditating on the contents of a book in a green cover which she holds in both hands. S. Mary Magdalene is clothed in a gold embroidered habit shirt, a plum-coloured bodice, and a green dress with a crimson girdle ; over these she wears a mantle of brown silk shot with a plum tinge. She has a blue velvet hair-band on which is embroidered in gold MARIA MAGDALE, and a gauze veil, and holds her attribute, the vase of precious ointment, on her lap.

Between the columns and throne are an iris, a tiger lily, and two white lilies in flower ; beyond is a garden of roses separated by a barrier and pathway from a vineyard enclosed by a brick wall. On the right an angel is gathering a bunch of grapes, while from the pathway, a little to the left of the centre, S. Anthony contemplates the scene ; in his right hand he holds a staff and bell, and his left rests on the barrier. Beyond the wall to the right are some pretty bits of domestic architecture, which, though not exactly like any buildings now remaining, remind one immediately of Bruges. On the left are a palace and an unfinished

[1] See, for a detailed description of this staff, *Le Beffroi*, tom. I, p. 337. Bruges, 1863.

foreground, kneels her votary, Richard de Visch van der [illegible] furred cassock and full-sleeved lawn surplice, with an almuce [illegible] left arm. On the pavement in front of him lies his cantor's staff, a fourteenth-century *tau* of silver gilt surmounted by a group representing the Most Holy Trinity adored by a monk and a cardinal, given to the church by Canon Nicholas de Bouchoute in 1337.[1] Beside the staff are a Breviary with gold clasps and a blue velvet cover and a [illegible], while in the [illegible] foreground reposes a greyhound with a collar composed of bells and an enamelled escucheon bearing the canon's arms: *argent*, semée of crosses treflées, at the feet fitched, two barbel haurient addorsed, all *sable*, De Visch; in chief an inescucheon *or*, charged with a chevron *gules*, Van Axele. To the left of the Madonna [illegible] S. Barbara and S. Mary Magdalene. The dress of the former, of [illegible] and gold brocade with a gold floral pattern, is cut square showing the underdress of cloth of gold embroidered with two peacocks [illegible] and [illegible] at the neck; the sleeves are large and of shot lilac and blue material. She wears a crimson cap and an enamelled and jewelled crown bearing her emblematic tower in front, and is meditating on the contents of a book in a green cover which she holds in both hands. S. Mary Magdalene is clothed in a gold [illegible] and [illegible], a pink-coloured [illegible] and a green dress with a [illegible] over these she wears a mantle of brown silk shot with a plum tinge. She has a blue velvet hair-band on which is embroidered in gold MARIA MAGDALE, and a gauze veil, and holds her attribute, the vase of precious ointment, on her lap.

Between the columns and throne are an iris, a tiger lily, and two white lilies in flower; beyond is a garden of roses separated by a barrier and pathway from a vineyard enclosed by a brick wall. On the right an [illegible] is gathering a bunch of grapes, while from the pathway, a little to the left of the centre, S. Anthony [illegible] approaches; in his right [illegible] holds a staff and bell, and his left rests on the barrier. Beyond the wall to the right are some pretty bits of domestic architecture, which, [illegible] not exactly like any buildings now [illegible], remind one [illegible] of Bruges. On the left are a palace and an [illegible]

[1] See, for a detailed description of this staff, *Le Beffroi*, tom. I, p. 337. Bruges, 1863.

Gerard David Pinx.

Walter L. Colls Ph. Sc

The Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine.

octagonal tower, bearing reference to the legend of S. Barbara. A squirrel eating a nut on the transom of one of the windows of the house on the right, a stork on the chimney top, and a bullfinch on the garden wall on the left enliven the scene and are painted with great skill.

This altar-piece, executed between 1500 and 1511, is in every way a remarkable picture, although unfortunately it has suffered a good deal from restoration. The hands of the Madonna, the right shoulder of the Child, the forehead and hand of S. Mary Magdalene and portions of the background have all been retouched. The canon's intelligent head is admirably modelled and painted, and the figure of S. Katherine executed with rare perfection. The jewellery, stuffs and draperies are rendered with David's usual skill, while the background, with its rich vegetation, vigorously coloured trees, and picturesque buildings is hardly surpassed by that of any of his other pictures.

This picture is now in the National Gallery (Oak; H. 41 in. B. 56¾ in.), having been bequeathed to the nation by the late Mrs. Lyne Stephens. It was previously at Paris, in the De Beurnonville collection, at the dispersal of which in 1881 it fetched 54,100 francs. M. de Beurnonville had purchased it at the sale of the collection of M. Edward O' in the catalogue of which it is described as having been painted by Hugo van der Goes for the chapel of the Marchese Giustiniani.

In 1501, a colleague of Richard van der Capelle and one of the executors of his will, Canon Bernardin Salviati, son of a rich Florentine merchant and of Christina van Rossem of Lebbeke, near Termonde, who was also a notary and secretary of the chapter of S. Donatian, having obtained leave to restore and embellish the altar of SS. John Baptist and Mary Magdalene, commissioned Gerard David to paint the shutters of the reredos. These shutters, together with those of several other altar reredoses in the nave of the church, were, at the request of the sacristan, who complained that they were always breaking the wax candles, sold in a lot by order of the chapter in 1787 for an insignificant sum of money. I have been unable to trace what became of the others, but this one was, as we learn from the letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford, bought in 1792 by Mr. Thomas Barrett, of Lee Priory, Kent, and it figures in the catalogue of that collection as "a group of Saints by John Gossaert of Maubeuge." At the sale of the Lee Priory

collection in May, 1859, it was knocked down to the late Mr. William Benoni White for 525 guineas. Sir J. C. Robinson, to whose intelligence and zeal we are indebted for almost all that is good in the way of mediæval art in the South Kensington Museum, drew my attention to the picture, which I at once recognised as being the right hand shutter of the reredos of Salviati's chantry altar. I tried hard, but in vain, to persuade the late Sir Charles Eastlake to purchase it for the National Gallery, but Mr. White would not part with it for less than £1000. Oddly enough the latter, who bore the character of being a most penurious and miserly man, by his last will and testament proved a generous benefactor to the nation, and left this panel in July 1878 to the National Gallery.[1]

The canon is represented kneeling in the immediate foreground, his head turned towards the left ; his brown hair is just commencing to turn grey. Over a black cassock edged with brown fur, he wears a plaited lawn surplice with a band of black embroidery at the upper end of the sleeves ; an almuce of grey squirrel's fur is thrown over his left arm. He is accompanied by three saints. On the left, a little in advance of the canon, and bending towards him, is S. Donatian, patron of the church, in full pontifical vestments : red cassock, alb and amice with apparels of black and gold brocade, dalmatic and cope of the same brocade lined with blue ; the dalmatic, rounded at the lower part, is edged with gold fringe ; the orfreys of the cope are embroidered with branches of foliage and with roses composed of pearls, rubies and sapphires. The circular morse of the cope is adorned with a statuette of the Madonna, accompanied by two angels playing on musical instruments, the whole under a canopy of tabernacle work. A mitre of cloth of gold sprinkled with pearls and precious stones, and a pair of rose-coloured gloves complete his costume. He has three rings, one set with a ruby, another with a sapphire ; the third, a plain gold ring, he wears on the fourth finger of the right hand, in which he holds with its red-embroidered white veil an archiepiscopal cross, of silver parcel-gilt and enamelled, supported by a staff adorned at its head with statuettes of the Madonna and Saints in canopied niches. In the saint's left hand Gerard has placed the emblem by which he is distinguished : a wheel set

[1] Oak ; H. 40½ in. ; B. 36¾ in.

in May, 1859. It was knocked down to the late Mr. William White for 525 guineas. Sir J. C. Robinson, to whose intelligence and zeal we are indebted for almost all that is good in the way of mediæval art in the South Kensington Museum, drew my attention to the picture, which I at once recognised as being the right hand shutter of the reredos of Salviati's chantry altar. I tried hard, but in vain, to persuade the late Sir Charles Eastlake to purchase it for the National Gallery. Mr. White would not part with it for less than £1000. Oddly enough the latter, who bore the character of being a most penurious and miserly man, by his last will and testament proved a benefactor to the nation, and left this panel in July 1878 to the National Gallery.[1]

The canon is represented kneeling in the immediate foreground, his head turned towards the left; his brown hair is just commencing to turn grey. Over a black cassock edged with brown fur, he wears a plaited lawn surplice with a band of black embroidery at the upper end of the sleeves; an almuce of grey squirrel's fur is thrown over his left arm. He is accompanied by three saints. On the left, a little in advance of the canon, is St. Donatian, patron of the church, in full pontifical vestments: red cassock, alb and amice with apparels of black and gold brocade, dalmatic and cope of the same brocade lined with blue; the dalmatic, rounded at the lower part, is edged with gold fringe; the orfreys of the cope are embroidered with branches of foliage and with roses composed of pearls, rubies and sapphires. The circular morse of the cope is adorned with a statuette of the Madonna, accompanied by two angels playing on musical instruments, the whole under a canopy of tabernacle work. A mitre of cloth of gold sprinkled with pearls and precious stones, and a pair of rose-coloured gloves complete his costume. He has three rings, one set with a ruby, another with a sapphire; the third, a plain gold ring, he wears on the fourth finger of the right hand, in which he holds with its red embroidered white veil an archiepiscopal cross, of silver parcel-gilt and enamelled, supported by a staff adorned at its head with statuettes of the Madonna and Saints in canopied niches. In the saint's left hand Gerard has placed the emblem by which he is distinguished: a wheel set

[1] Oak; H. 40½ in.; B. 36¾ in.

Gerard David Pinx.

Walter L. Colls Ph. Sc.

A Canon and his Patron Saints.

round with five lighted tapers. Immediately behind the canon is his own personal patron, S. Bernardin of Siena, in the old grey habit of the Friars Minor, extending his right hand as a token of protection over the canon, and supporting with his left against his breast a book bound in red, with gilt corners and clasps and a central medallion bearing the most Holy Name of Jesus on a ground of blue enamel.

On the right, in the rear of the canon but slightly nearer the front of the picture, stands S. Martin vested in a blue cassock, an alb with red apparels, and a splendid cope of crimson velvet with broad orfreys embroidered with figures of SS. Donatian, Bernardin, Martin, John Baptist, and Mary Magdalene, doubtless the chantry priest's best cope. The morse, eight-lobed, has in its centre a figure of S. Martin cutting his mantle in two, beneath a canopy surrounded by a hollow adorned with pearls and escucheons. The hood of the cope, on which is embroidered the Adoration of the Magi, is interesting from an archæological point of view on account of its having a *spilla* of silver gilt, an ornament of which I know no existing example, and which is rarely met with in pictures, though often mentioned in inventories of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The saint wears a violet skull-cap, a red mitre with delicate sprays of gold and rich borders and cresting with stones and pearls; white gloves with two rings, the one on the second, the other on the third finger of his right hand, complete his costume. In his left hand he holds a crozier adorned with blue enamel, the knop formed by eight canopied niches with statuettes of Saints; an angel standing on a short column supports the crook in which is a seated figure of Our Lady with the Infant Jesus who is stretching out His hand to receive a lily from an angel kneeling before Him. The saint's right hand is raised in the act of blessing. A little behind S. Martin, on the road issuing from the wood, is a lame beggar leaning on a staff and hobbling towards the saint with his left hand extended for an alms. This man, in a blue-grey tunic and two odd boots, has a bowl stuck in his girdle, and a wallet suspended from his right shoulder by a strap fastened across his breast. The landscape, in the rocky foreground of which these figures are placed, is painted in a brownish tone; in the immediate background is a forest of large trees, and on the left in the mid-distance, a castle with mountains beyond.

This picture, with the exception of some slight retouches in the faces of S. Donatian and S. Bernardin, is in a nearly perfect state of preservation. The heads are fine and full of character; that of the donor is really admirable both as regards modelling and colour, and is almost on a par with Memlinc's finest portraits. The jewellery and vestments are capitally rendered, the crimson velvet cope being in its way a masterpiece. The beggar is also an excellent study from nature painted from the same model as the S. Anthony in the De Visch altarpiece. The trees are highly and vigorously coloured, and the subdued light beneath their thick foliage admirably rendered.

Among the persons named in the accounts of the treasurers of the city of Bruges for the year 1498 as having been charged with the valuation of the *Judgement of Cambyses* and the *Execution of Sisamnes* were James Spronc, a decorative painter, Jodoc de Smet, a painter, John de Corte, and John des Trompes, at that time bailey of Ostend, treasurer of Bruges and a citizen of note. The last mentioned was probably struck with the talents displayed by Gerard and commissioned him to paint the triptych known as *The Baptism of Christ*, that being the subject represented in the principal or central panel. In the foreground our Lord is seen girt with a loin-cloth, standing in the Jordan, the water of which comes up to His knees. His hands are joined in prayer and His face wears an expression of deep recollection. The Baptist kneeling on the bank to the left is pouring water out of the hollow of his hand on the Saviour's head. He wears a tunic of camel's skin confined at the waist by a scarf and over it a red mantle. To the right kneels an angel in a cope of gold brocade edged with a red fringe, and having an embroidered hood bordered with pearls and precious stones, holding our Lord's robe on his arms. The Holy Spirit coming down as a dove from heaven in a glory of gold rays hovers above Christ's head, whilst high up in the sky is seen the Eternal Father, surrounded by wingless angels, blessing His Son.

On the right shutter, on the grassy ground, kneels John des Trompes, in a fur-lined robe, with his son Philip at his side; his patron, S. John the Evangelist, stands behind him in a grey robe and white mantle thrown over the left shoulder, holding a chalice-shaped cup in his left hand, and extending his right towards his client.

The Baptism of Christ. Museum of the Academy, Bruges.

On the left shutter the donor's first wife, Elisabeth von der Meersch, is seen kneeling with her four daughters Hedwigis, Anne, Joan, and Agnes, protected by S. Elisabeth of Hungary. She wears a dress of black cloth cut square at the neck, an underdress of black velvet, and a kerchief of fine linen ; at her girdle hangs a chaplet of gold and silver filigree beads, with a reliquary-cross adorned with pearls. The saint is attired in a blue dress lined with grey fur, and confined at the waist by a red band ; the dress, open in front, shows an under-bodice of black velvet. Over these she wears a brown mantle ; with both hands she supports a book on which are two crowns, a third is placed on her white head-kerchief ; these symbolising her sanctity as virgin, wife, and widow.

The scene of this picture is laid in a splendid and highly-tinted mountainous and rocky landscape, which is here a more important feature than in any earlier representation of the subject. In the mid-distance, on the right, is seen the Precursor, seated on a moss-grown rock, preaching to a group of twenty-five persons ; two others are drawing near to listen. On the left, in the shade beneath the trees, S. John is pointing out the Messiah to three of his disciples, one of whom is leaving to follow Him. In the background are rocks and a city, above and beyond which rises a mountain crowned by a large castle. Nothing can well be finer than this portion of the picture ; the trees, vigorously painted and finished with wonderful minuteness, have evidently been studied individually from nature, as though of many different kinds they each and all preserve the character of their respective foliage and form. Between their trunks we get glimpses of really distant landscape. The herbage, lilies, mallows, violets, and other flowers in the immediate front have never been more admirably reproduced by the art of the painter. The wavelets of the water agitated by the wind in the broader part of the river, and, in the less exposed inlet, the concentric circles around the Saviour's legs expanding and intersecting each other until they break against the rocky banks are another instance of careful observation. The transparency of the water, the reflections of surrounding objects and the shadows on its surface are faithfully rendered. The bedding of the rocks, too, is imitated with perfect truth. The colouring of all this portion is so remarkably bright and lovely that the faults of the composition are not at first noticed. The principal group not only surcharges the foreground but is

somewhat inharmonious in colour, this, however, being doubtless due to overcleaning—the picture was in 1579 daubed with black distemper on which were painted the Ten Commandments, and thus escaped being destroyed or stolen by the Calvinist iconoclasts. The figures in the middle distance, if examined separately, are short, stout, and wanting in elegance, though making up picturesque and very natural groups. The portraits of the donors and their patron saints, relieved by the sombre lines of the forest background, are admirably painted ; the heads of the angel, of the lady, and of the little boy are perfect miniatures ; the hands are skilfully drawn and modelled.

John des Trompes' first wife died on the 11th of March, 1502. I have not been able to ascertain when he married his second, Mary Magdalene Cordier, who died in July, 1509, after having had three children : Isabella, John, and Anne. During her lifetime, probably in 1507, or early in 1508, David painted the exterior of the shutters of this triptych. On the right is seen the Virgin Mother seated in an open gallery or portico under a circular canopy suspended from the vaulting, and furnished with green curtains. She wears a plain red dress and mantle ; her dress loose and flowing, without any cincture, is lined with grey fur, and cut open at the neck, so as to show a little linen which serves to relieve the flesh tones. Her hair, falling in long wavy masses over her shoulders, is kept in its place by a black velvet riband, adorned with pearls and a jewel. She supports the Infant Jesus, clothed in a long-sleeved white tunic, and seated on her knees, and holds His right arm to keep Him from falling as He bends forward holding a bunch of grapes towards Mary Magdalene Cordier, who, protected by her patron saint, kneels before Him with her daughter Isabella. The lady wears a black velvet vest and a long, full-sleeved brown dress, lined with fur. From her cincture, formed by a white sash, hangs a chaplet of silver and gold filigree beads with an oval medal of the Immaculate Virgin. She has a kerchief of white lawn. The little girl, in black vest and grey fur-lined dress, confined at the waist by a long brown-pink scarf with a knotted fringe, has a white linen cap and a kerchief of velvet, embroidered with gold. S. Mary Magdalene holds her pot of ointment, and is attired in a violet dress lined with green, with a scarf round the waist. Her chest is covered by fine-plaited cambric, bordered with gold embroidery.

Exterior of the Shutters of the Picture of "The Baptism of Christ."

The Virgin and Infant Saviour holding a bunch of grapes.

Mary Magdalene Cordier with her daughter and patron Saint.

A head-band of black velvet, adorned with pearls and a large gold-mounted ruby, and a turban of fine white linen complete her costume. These figures are in a gallery or portico with large open arches, through which is seen the courtyard of a mansion adorned with columns and surrounded by lofty gables.

This triptych was given in 1520 by the heirs of John des Trompes and his two first wives to the confraternity of lawyers, and was placed over the altar of their chapel of S. Laurence in the lower church of S. Basil. As I have already mentioned, it escaped the notice of the Calvinists in 1579, but was carried off by the French in 1794; brought back from Paris in 1815, it was placed in the Museum of the Academy, where it is still preserved.[1]

The next picture in order of date, and in my opinion David's masterpiece, was presented by him in 1509 to the convent of the Carmelite nuns of Sion at Bruges, and adorned the high altar of their church until their convent was suppressed by the Emperor Joseph in 1783.[2] At the sale of conventual property at Brussels in July, 1785, it was purchased by a well-known picture dealer named Berthels for fifty-one florins, and by him sold to a Mr. Miliotti, whose property was confiscated by the French Republic. Later on the French Government gave it to the museum of Rouen, of which it is still one of the chief treasures.[3] In the arrangement of this altar-piece David followed that of a picture painted for the Gild of the *Drie Sanctinnen*, SS. Mary Magdalene, Katherine and Barbara, by an unknown artist in 1489, now in the museum at Brussels.[4]

In the centre of David's picture is the Madonna, seated on a metal fald-stool covered with red drapery, which falls to the ground and is stretched out beneath her feet. Her full flowing dress, unconfined by a

[1] Oak; H. 51¾ in.; B. centre, 39 in.; shutters, 17 in. The documents relating to this picture are printed in *Le Beffroi*, tom. I, pp. 257–287, and II, pp. 294–297. Bruges, 1863–65.

[2] The convent escaped being pillaged by the iconoclasts in 1579 owing to the intervention of the brother of one of the nuns, the Calvinist James de Chantraines, friend and host of their leader, the infamous Colonel Henry Balfour.

[3] Oak; H. 47 in.; B. 83½ in.

[4] Oak; H. 41¼ in.; B. 67 in. For a full description of this picture see *The Ecclesiologist*, p. 30. London, 1888. The figure of S. Mary Magdalene is, with the exception of the arms, exactly the same as in the *Entombment*, ascribed to Roger van der Weyden, in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence.

girdle, is of dark blue cloth lined with grey fur and cut low at the neck to show an under-bodice of white linen; she also wears a dark blue mantle and a crown richly ornamented with pearls, rubies, and sapphires. Her eyes are looking down, and her long fairish wavy hair falls over her shoulders. With her right hand she supports the Infant Child, who, clothed in a long-sleeved white tunic opening in front, is seated on her knees and holds with both hands a bunch of grapes, the symbol of the Eucharist, which the Madonna presents to Him.

On each side of the Virgin's throne stands a lovely angel with outspread wings, clothed in a white alb; one is playing a mandoline, the other a viola. In the background, between the Virgin and the angel on the right, is S. Fausta, holding a little saw and wearing a dark green head-covering; in a similar position on the left, S. Apollonia in a dark green dress with grey-violet bodice, carrying a pair of pincers in her right hand.

In the right foreground are seated four saints; one next to the angel with the mandoline has no emblem; she wears a red dress bordered with black, and a dark violet headdress, the lining of which is blue; a light white veil falls without folds to her eyebrows. In front of her is S. Agnes, clothed in a green robe bordered with fur and cut square at the neck, showing a dark underdress and a plaited white garment; her violet headdress is bordered with goffered gold passementerie. Her emblematic lamb lies at her feet, and she turns with an interrogative air to S. Katherine, seated on her right with a book in her hands. The latter is superbly clothed in a dress of crimson and gold brocade, lined and bordered with ermine, with sleeves of olive green velvet slashed to show puffs of white linen. Around her neck is a gold chain with a jewel composed of sapphires, rubies and pearls, and on her head an emblematic crown of golden wheels surrounded by pearls and separated from each other by precious stones. A little behind S. Katherine, and at the extreme right of the panel, is S. Dorothea, holding a small basket full of red roses, which she contemplates with an expression of charming modesty. She wears a rather bright blue dress and a brownish black under-robe. Her hair is confined by a band composed of three rows of pearls. Behind her, in the background, the painter has introduced his own portrait. His brown tunic is open and allows his plaited shirt to be

Altarpiece for the Gild of the Drie Sanctinnen, by an unknown artist. Brussels Museum.

seen ; a lock of light brown hair falls over his forehead down to his eyebrows. He appears here to be about forty-five years old, and has a more refined air than in the drawing preserved in the library at Arras[1] ; his complexion is sallow and his eyes are dark grey, nearly brown.

The left side of the picture is similarly occupied by four saints. Nearest to the Madonna is S. Godeleva, reading attentively and wearing an orange-red dress, having its sleeves lined with black velvet ; a long scarf round her neck and a golden circlet on her head, set with three blackish stones and adorned with pearls hanging like drops of water, are symbolical of the manner of her martyrdom. Beside her is seated S. Barbara turning over the leaves of a richly illuminated Book of Hours. She is clothed in a green velvet dress cut square at the neck, showing a little linen and a brownish black underdress. The sleeves, made of gold damask, different to that which is used to border the dress, are short, but beneath them are long full sleeves of a shot pale blue and pale rose material. A square jewel composed of gold ornaments, five pearls, and a ruby, is attached to a black cord round her neck. A golden girdle and a crown, adorned in front with her emblematic tower in gold and pearls, complete her attire.

In the background, between S. Godeleva and S. Barbara, is S. Cecilia with her organ at her side. She wears a dark violet dress and a black underdress ; her headgear, of the same colour as her dress, is embroidered with gold. The extreme left is occupied by S. Lucy, holding two sparkling eyes in her hand. She wears a dress of brocade of two shades of crimson open at the neck, showing a chemisette of fine cambric. The full flowing sleeves are lined with green, and a broad green sash is knotted round her waist. Her headdress, of deep violet velvet lined with blue, is bordered with gold fringe. To the left of S. Lucy in the background Cornelia Cnoop, the painter's wife, stands with her hands joined in prayer. She wears a brownish black dress bordered with narrow white fur and a large white coif, which falls on each side of her face and over the back of her head. Her eyes are brown.

The background of the picture is of a deep green nearly black. The locality of the scene is only indicated by a pavement of white, yellow and pale blue stones. The heads of the figures are very nearly a quarter life-

[1] Reproduced in *Le Beffroi*, tom. 1, p. 223.

size; the flesh tints are as a rule white, the expressions sweet and melancholy. The angels may be cited as amongst the most charming figures realised by the early Netherlandish school, and the details are without exception admirably finished.

The altar of Our Lady in the collegiate chapel of Grancey le Château (Côte d'Or) was formerly adorned with a triptych by Gerard David, now in the possession of Mme. de Denterghem of Astene (E. Flanders).[1] The interior of the three panels is occupied by a representation of the Assumption. In the centre is the open tomb in which the body of the Blessed Virgin has been deposited. At the head of the tomb on the right S. Peter, his right hand raised in the act of blessing, is reading a prayer from a manuscript volume which S. John supports against his right shoulder with one hand, while he stretches out the other to grasp the holy water sprinkler handed to him by a third apostle standing near the foot of the tomb; a fourth, kneeling in front of S. John, supports a metal vat. S. Peter, here represented as an aged man with white hair, is clothed in white; S. John, in greenish blue, is a portrait of the artist, just a little older than in the picture at Rouen; the apostle, who is handing him the sprinkler, has a scarlet tunic and a green mantle; the one holding the vat a dark green tunic, a claret-coloured mantle thrown over his left shoulder, and a scarlet cap. A fifth with long brown hair and beard, kneeling in the foreground to the left, with the fingers of his right hand between the leaves of a half-closed book is clad in a greenish blue tunic. On the right shutter are three more; one kneels in the foreground enveloped in a green mantle thrown over his head; another, in scarlet tunic and mantle, is blowing the coals in a silver thurible, the foot of which he holds with his right hand, whilst he raises the cover and chains with his left; the third, in dark blue holds an open incense-boat and spoon. On the left shutter are the other four apostles; one, in a purplish tunic with a green mantle thrown over his left shoulder, carries an open book in which he is reading with the help of eyeglasses held in his right hand; two others are praying, the one in a grey mantle, with his hands extended; the other, in a green tunic with a blue mantle which has fallen from his shoulders, has his hands joined; the fourth, in green with a claret-coloured mantle stands

[1] Oak; H. 45 in.; B. centre, 34 in.; shutters, $14\frac{1}{16}$ in.

flesh tints are as a rule white, the expressions sweet and melancholy. The angels may be cited as amongst the most charming figures realised by the early Netherlandish school, and the details are without exception admirably finished.

The altar of Our Lady in the collegiate chapel of Grancey le Château (Côte d'Or) was formerly adorned with a triptych by Gerard David now in the possession of Mme. de Denterghem of Astene (E. Flanders).[1] The interior of the three panels is occupied by a representation of the Assumption. In the centre is the open tomb in which the body of the Blessed Virgin has been deposited. At the head of the tomb on the right S. Peter, his right hand raised in the act of blessing, is reading a prayer from a manuscript volume which S. John supports against his right shoulder with one hand, while he stretches out the other to grasp the holy water sprinkler handed to him by a third apostle standing near the foot of the tomb; a fourth, kneeling in front of S. John, supports a metal vat. S. Peter, here represented as an aged man with white hair, is clothed in white; S. John, in greenish blue, is a portrait of the artist, just a little older than in the picture at Rouen; the apostle, who is handing him the sprinkler, has a scarlet tunic and a green mantle; the one holding the vat a dark green tunic, a claret-coloured mantle thrown over his left shoulder, and a scarlet cap. A fifth with long brown hair and beard, kneeling in the foreground to the left, with the fingers of his right hand between the leaves of a half-closed book is clad in a greenish blue tunic. On the right shutter are three more; one kneels in the foreground enveloped in a green mantle thrown over his head; another, in scarlet tunic and mantle, is blowing the coals in a silver thurible, the foot of which he holds with his right hand, whilst he raises the cover and chains with his left; the third, in dark blue holds an open incense-boat and spoon. On the left shutter are the other four apostles; one, in a purplish tunic with a green mantle thrown over his left shoulder, carries an open book in which he is reading with the help of eyeglasses held in his right hand; two others are praying, the one in a grey mantle, with his hands extended; the other, in a green tunic with a blue mantle which has fallen from his shoulders, has his hands joined; the fourth, in green with a claret-coloured mantle stands

[1] Oak; H. 45 in.; B. centre, 34 in.; shutters, 14$\frac{1}{8}$ in.

The Madonna and Virgin Saints.

with interlaced hands at the foot of a tree on the extreme left. One half of the apostles are absorbed in the respective parts of the funeral service they are engaged in; the other six are gazing upwards at an opening in the clouds which occupies the entire half of the central panel, where in golden light the Virgin Mary, surrounded by seven most graceful angels all in greenish blue girded albs, is soaring upwards through the court of heaven to receive the crown which the Eternal Father and her Divine Son are waiting to bestow on her, while a countless number of angels are singing and playing on an immense variety of musical instruments.

The background is occupied by a remarkably fine landscape; in the centre is a river opening out wider in the distance, on which are a number of ships and boats; an island, in the half distance, covered with buildings is connected by a bridge with a town on the bank, with hills, rocks, and trees which extend across the left shutter. On the extreme right is a castle-crowned rock with a winding road down which is advancing the funeral procession, headed by S. John; two men who have attempted to profane the bier are falling back over the precipice, their withered hands remaining attached to the pall; other figures further down are looking on. In the immediate front are flowers and herbage and a butterfly.

On the exterior of the shutters are figured S. Andrew and S. Katherine in the foreground of a mountainous landscape, diversified with numerous buildings, a palace with towers, a wood, and cottages. S. Andrew, a middle-aged man with dark brown hair and beard, clad in a purplish brown tunic and crimson mantle fastened over the right shoulder, holds a closed book in his right hand, and with his left supports a saltire cross. S. Katherine stands facing him, her right hand resting on the handle of a sword, whilst she reads a book supported by her left; at her feet lies a broken wheel of torture. She wears a tight fitting dress of crimson velvet cut square at the neck showing a cambric habit shirt; over her right shoulder is a grey mantle which she holds up with her left hand. A jewelled headdress of goldsmiths' work with a long rose-coloured veil floating behind completes her costume.

In the red room of the Municipal Palace at Genoa is a triptych, formerly attributed to Albert Dürer, which presents the greatest affinity

to the altar-piece at Rouen. The central panel (height, 5 ft. 2 in.; breadth, 2 ft. 11 in.) is occupied by a figure of the Madonna seated on a throne beneath a canopy, the green drapery of which is thrown round the supporting columns. She wears a dark blue dress with fur-lined sleeves, confined at the waist by a girdle and over it an ample flowing mantle of the same colour bordered in gold embroidery with the anthem : "Salve (mater) misericordie : vita dulcedo et spes nostra. . . . o clemens o dulcis Virgo Maria." Her long wavy hair falls in masses over her shoulders, and is kept in place by a band adorned with a jewel. Her face wears an expression of deep thought, and her eyes, lowered, are fixed on her Son, whom she supports with both hands. He is seated on her right knee, clothed in a white linen tunic open at the throat, and holds in His hands a bunch of grapes.

On the right panel is S. Jerome, represented as a man of from forty-five to fifty years of age with a dark brown beard. He is habited as a cardinal, and is standing reading from a book which he supports with his right hand, while in his left he holds a fleur de lisé cross. Behind him on the pavement reposes a lion. On the left panel is a Benedictine saint, holding in his right hand with its veil a crozier and carrying a closed book in his left. Both the cross and the crozier are splendid specimens of goldsmiths' work.

The background is formed by a dado of masonry and by hangings adorned with a variety of flowers, birds, and animals, painted with great care and truth. The tone of the picture is rather sombre.

The Imperial Picture Gallery at Vienna possesses a triptych of unknown date, the principal panel of which represents S. Michael driving Satan and his rebel host down into the jaws of hell, while the shutters are occupied by figures of saints. This picture, which was formerly in the collection of M. Adamnovitz, passed about the year 1840 into the possession of M. Artaria of Vienna, and at the sale of his collection on January 13th, 1887, was purchased for the gallery. The triptych is in its original frame.

In the central compartment, which measures 66 inches by 53, is seen the Archangel Michael who has just come down from heaven, his wings being still outspread as he drives a host of demons into an abyss surrounded by barren rocks, between which flames are shooting up. He

is clothed in a girdled white alb, shaded blue, a violet stole crossed over his breast, and a large crimson mantle lined with pale green, having orfreys embroidered with figures of saints, and fastened by a gold morse bearing a representation of the Ancient of Days between two adoring angels. His left hand is armed with a silver buckler, on which is a red cross set off from the grey ground by a white edge. In his right hand he holds a cross with a long staff with which he confounds the rebel host. The glory of the fallen angels has entirely disappeared, their wings have no longer plumes but are like those of bats and dragons, their features have become monstrous; on two tails have sprouted—hands and feet are changed into paws and hoofs, nails into claws. Lowest of all those beneath the archangel's feet is Lucifer himself, gnashing his teeth as he looks upwards at the calm majestic figure of S. Michael. In the upper part of the panel, through an opening in the clouds on the left, is seen the Almighty surrounded by an aureole of light, vested in crimson and crowned with a tiara; He bears a sceptre in His left hand, while His right is raised in the act of blessing. Three angels, clothed in white and red and armed with long crosses, are driving a host of demons into the abyss; a fourth is flying down to their aid. The lower portion and background of the panel are occupied by rocks; on the left is a pool of water in which demons are being engulfed.

The side panels measure 66 inches by 22. On the inside of each is a saint seen in three-quarters profile. On the right, S. Jerome, who is represented as a noble elderly cardinal with a brown beard just turning grey. He wears a grey cassock and a scarlet robe bordered and lined with white fur; the hat is thrown back on to his shoulders and his hands are covered with grey leather gloves; he is bending slightly and reading from an open book protected by a loose leather cover which he holds in his right hand. In his left he carries a richly ornamented cross, the base of which, resting on the top of the staff, is adorned with statuettes in canopied niches supported by slender detached pillars. Behind the saint is a lion in repose.

On the left panel is S. Anthony of Padua, clothed in the grey habit of the Friars Minor, and holding in his right hand a long wooden cross, which has for its sole ornament four knops composed of interlaced strips of leather. With his left hand he supports an open book on which a

nude child is kneeling with hands joined, symbolising the lifting up of the saint's soul to God. The background of both panels is a continuation of that in the centre, but the barren rocks are replaced towards the outer sides by wooded mountains with a river flowing at their base. A scanty herbage embellishes the foreground.

On the exterior of the shutters are two saints, each of whom is placed in a square-headed niche. S. Sebastian, on the right, is represented as a man of about thirty-five years of age, with a short beard and curly brown hair. He wears a suit of steel armour, a neutral green mantle thrown over his left shoulder, leaving his right arm free, and a broad-brimmed beaver hat. With his left hand he holds a bow and in his right three arrows. On the opposite shutter is a female saint with a boy at her side, whose right hand she grasps as if to keep him by her, whilst with slightly bent head she reads a book supported by her right hand. She wears over a tight-fitting green dress a red robe girt with a black leather belt fastened with a golden buckle; a deep violet mantle and a white headdress complete her costume. The boy, who appears to be about five years old, wears a dark claret-coloured tunic and hose of untanned leather, and carries three nails in his left hand. These are said to represent SS. Julitta and Cyriacus, I know not on what ground, as I have never seen the latter represented as here, and can find nothing in his life to warrant such an emblem being given to him.

This triptych presents a very remarkable appearance; the composition is harmonious, and the attitudes, especially that of the archangel, whose calm expression contrasts admirably with the ugliness and rage of the demons whom he is overthrowing, are full of dignity. Great taste is shown in the arrangement of the draperies; the heads, especially those of SS. Michael, Sebastian and Julitta, are noble and beautifully formed; the hands are modelled with the greatest care and the touch is free but accurate. The colouring is warm, and the flesh tints incline a little more to brown than they do in the triptych of *The Baptism of Christ.* The water of the river in the left wing is painted in the same manner as in that picture, but we do not here see such striking contrasts in the colours of the dresses. The S. Jerome is painted from the same model as in the triptych at Genoa, but with slight variations in the pose.

These are all the paintings that can at present with certainty be

Exterior of the Shutters of the picture of "S. Michael."

S. Sebastian. *Female Saint with a Boy.*

assigned to Gerard David. We know so little about him and his pupils that the greatest caution should be exercised before accepting as authentic any of the other works attributed to him. The pictures above described have without exception been assigned to other and even very different masters, not only by dealers, but by experts and connoisseurs generally recognised as competent critics. Moreover, even as regards the pictures admittedly David's there are points which need clearing up. It will have been noticed that all his earlier pictures have landscape backgrounds; that these landscapes, evidently careful studies direct from nature, have no resemblance to the flat land about Bruges, but represent well-wooded mountainous and rocky country, watered by winding streams, such scenery, in short, as is to be found in the district lying between the Rhine and the Meuse. I pointed this out so long ago as 1861 when describing the triptych of *The Baptism of Christ*, before I had discovered that David had anything to do with that picture. I then expressed the opinion that it might possibly be the work of two hands, and that the two men at the foot of the rocks in the mid-distance on the right panel might be portraits; and further on I noticed the resemblance between the landscape in this and in a picture representing the Holy Family resting on the road to Egypt in the Antwerp Museum (No. 73), and said that whoever was the painter he certainly exercised a great influence on Joachim Patenir. Later on I discovered that David went to Antwerp in 1515, was inscribed as master-painter in the register of S. Luke's gild, and that, curiously enough, the next name in the roll was that of Joachim Patenir. The latter artist stayed at Antwerp. David returned to Bruges, and from that day until his death the backgrounds of his pictures are either plain or architectural. It is therefore quite possible that Patenir may have painted the landscapes in David's earlier pictures. This surmise is strengthened by the striking similarity between the details of some of Patenir's landscapes and the backgrounds of David's pictures, as for instance in the view of a town and island in the central panel of David's *Assumption of the Blessed Virgin* and in Patenir's landscape with the martyrdom of S. Katherine in the Imperial Gallery at Vienna (1093). It is also established that the principal figures in the landscapes painted by Patenir after he settled in Antwerp, 1515, are by other masters. We have moreover positive evidence that it had been the constant practice

of the early Netherlandish artists to employ specialists to paint accessories, such as stuffs, jewellery, animals, &c., and that the master-painter, who received a commission, was only bound to design the composition, and to paint with his own hand the nude portions of the figures, in which there was the most art. In David's pictures the landscape is still an accessory, though in the triptych of the Baptism at least it almost equals the figures in importance. Patenir was the first to make the landscape the dominant feature of a picture and to treat the figures as accessories. On the other hand it is just possible that David was Patenir's master, and that in his later years he had no opportunity of travelling and painting landscapes such as he admired—the artists who settled in Bruges do not seem to have ever cared for the flats of Flanders, but retained a love for the hilly country beyond the Scheldt. This was the case with the Van Eycks, the originators and founders of modern landscape painting, with Gerard of S. John's, Dirk Bouts, Roger van der Weyden, and Hans Memlinc. I cannot recall a single exception.

The confraternity of the Holy Blood at Bruges possesses a triptych [1] which according to documents preserved in its archives is a work of Gerard David. The three panels form one picture, the subject, composed of a group of ten figures, being the Deposition. In the foreground of the central panel the Body of Christ laid on a winding-sheet is supported by Nicodemus, a man with a long white beard who occupies the extreme right. In the centre, the Blessed Virgin with joined hands bends forward over the body of her Divine Son ; S. John supports her with his right arm and at the same time holds up the Saviour's left arm. On the Virgin's right is Mary Salome and, at the extreme left, a man with a metal vase of perfumes. S. Mary Magdalene and Mary Cleophas occupy the right panel, the former carrying her vase of precious ointment, the cover of which she is removing with her left hand. On the left panel are three persons, the foremost of whom, S. Joseph of Arimathea, carries the crown of thorns laid on a white cloth. In the background of the central panel is seen Mount Calvary with the Cross standing between the two crucified thieves, a patibulary wheel, two soldiers, and a man carrying away a ladder ; on the right wing is the city of Jerusalem and a distant landscape ; on the left, a mountain and trees.

[1] Oak ; H. $40\frac{3}{4}$ in. ; B. centre, $27\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; shutters, $12\frac{1}{4}$ in.

The Blessed Virgin is clothed in a blue robe lined with grey squirrel fur, a large blue mantle and a white linen head kerchief. Nicodemus has a sleeveless robe of crimson and gold velvet brocade, bordered and lined with brown fur, full sleeves of shot taffeta silk, lilac and grey, and a blue kerchief wrapped round a rose-coloured turban, the top of which is adorned with gold embroidery. S. John wears a tunic and mantle of red cloth ; a pen-case and a black leather wallet are attached to his belt. Mary Salome has a green robe and a white turban-shaped headdress ; the man on the left a green mantle with a stand-up collar and a conical hat of black felt. S. Mary Magdalene is habited in a light blue close-fitting sleeveless dress bordered with fur, girdled over her hips with a rose and blue silk scarf ; her sleeves of rose-coloured cloth are slashed to show the yellow lining. An ample olive green mantle envelops the lower portion of her body. Her long hair, which falls in masses over her shoulders, is confined by a narrow circlet fastened in front with a rich jewel composed of rubies surrounded by pearls. A very elegant headdress of red velvet bordered with goldsmiths' work and covered by a transparent gauze veil knotted on the top of her head, completes her costume. Mary Cleophas wears a grey robe bordered with gold lace and pearls and lined with white fur ; her headdress is of violet silk covered with a network of gold cords and pearls ; attached to it by a rich jewel is a transparent veil which falls over her shoulders. S. Joseph of Arimathea has a robe of olive green lined and bordered with fur ; false sleeves which fall from the elbows, show under-sleeves of a superb gold and silver brocade ; the robe is fastened in front by a gold brooch and confined at the waist by a leather belt covered with gold plaques, to which is suspended a large purse. On his head is a large flat cap of red velvet lined with brown fur. The man next him, of a very pronounced Jewish type, has a forked beard, and wears a grey cloth robe lined with red with a deep turn-down collar.

The composition of this triptych is very good ; its execution firm and the colouring rich and powerful ; the types of the female figures are better than those of the men ; S. Joseph of Arimathea however has a noble head. The flesh tints are painted in a brownish tone. The picture, restored in 1675, 1773 and 1827, is fairly well preserved ; it seems to have been painted under the influence of Quentin Matsys,

and therefore probably about the time of David's sojourn in Antwerp. Its attribution to him is contested, but I do not think that the opinions of two or three modern critics warrant our rejection of the evidence in its favour. I have seen several copies of this triptych.

In the Museum of the Louvre at Paris is a painting (Oak; H. 37¾ in.; B. 50 in.; figures, 24 in.) representing the Marriage feast at Cana, which formerly adorned the altar of the confraternity of the Holy Blood in the upper church of S. Basil at Bruges. The feast is represented as taking place in a room separated from a public square by an open colonnade. Against the wall in the background is hung tapestry adorned with foliage, flowers and strawberries intermingled with birds and hares, with a red border on which is embroidered in gold letters: FILI MEI DATE MANDA(tum). In front of this is seated the bride dressed in a full-sleeved crimson robe and mantle lined with white fur; the latter is fastened by a cord attached to two jewels. Her long hair falls in wavy masses over her shoulders. A rich gold chain passed twice round her neck, and a diadem adorned with precious stones set on a purple coif complete her costume. On the bride's left is her mother, and on her right, another woman, next to whom is the Blessed Virgin in a dark blue dress and white veil, and, at the return end of the table, our Lord in a bluish grey tunic between two maidens. At the opposite end is the chief steward of the feast with a woman at each side of him. Facing the Virgin is seated a maiden; on her right stands the bridegroom who is carving a fowl. In the foreground are six large brown stoneware water-pots, a waiter grasps the handle of one of these with his left hand, and with his right lifts up a pewter tankard. A little more to the left is a young man kneeling and holding up a silver parcel-gilt beaker, the richly-chased cover of which he has removed with his left hand. Our Lord, at the request of His Mother, who is bending forward with joined hands, raises his hand to bless the water. In the immediate foreground on the extreme right kneels the donor, John van der Straeten, wearing the costume of the provost of the confraternity, a scarlet tight-fitting tunic and a black robe lined with sable and embroidered down the front with interlacing branches of silver and drops of crimson blood; behind him kneels his son Francis, a fair-haired little boy. At the opposite extremity is his wife,

Anne de la Bye, her hands joined in prayer; she is clad in a black velvet dress with very full sleeves lined with sable, and a white linen headdress; a silver rosary with a cross adorned with pearls hangs from her girdle. On the right, outside the chamber is a Dominican friar contemplating the scene through an opening between the columns. Through the doorway, on his left, a lad is carrying in a pasty. In the

The Marriage Feast at Cana. Louvre.

background are seen the old palace of the Liberty of Bruges, the church of S. Donatian and some of its dependent buildings, as seen from the porch of S. Basil's at the time this work was executed. The picture is painted with great body of colour; the attitude of the bride and the general arrangement of the composition is like David's work, but the sharp contrasts of brilliant colours in the dresses exceed anything in the pictures already described. A sketch for this picture submitted

to the confraternity, was approved of at a meeting of that body held on February 17th, 1519, and the contract with the painter was no doubt concluded shortly afterwards, but the picture could not have been finished until after David's death, for the donor, who is here represented as provost, was only elected to that office in May 1523, at which date David was laid up with an illness which terminated fatally on the 13th of August following.[1] There can, I think, be little doubt that the work was completed by his pupil, Adrian Isenbrant, the initial of whose Christian name is carved on the back of the stool on which the maiden facing the Blessed Virgin is seated.

Adrian is the only painter known to have been a pupil of Gerard David. He purchased the right of citizenship at Bruges in 1510. On the 29th of November in that year he was admitted as master-painter into the gild of SS. Luke and Eligius; at that date, if married, he at least had no children. He was a member of the council of his craft in 1516–17 and on several other occasions, the last being in 1547–48. He is said to have excelled in painting the nude and as a portrait-painter. Isenbrant was twice married; his first wife was Mary, daughter of Peter Grandeel; his second, Clementina, only daughter of John de Haerne. He died in July, 1551, and was buried in the churchyard of S. James at Bruges. I know of no picture that can be attributed to him with certainty. In 1539 a maidservant stole several pictures of his, one of which, the portrait of a Spaniard, was valued at £10.

Among the many early Netherlandish pictures in the Imperial Gallery at Vienna are two half-length portraits of a young man and his wife (H. 21¼ in.; B. 8½ in.; Heads, 5½in. and 5⅛ in.) attributed to Mark Gerard; these were formerly at Brussels in the possession of the Archduke Leopold William of Austria. In the inventory of his collection drawn up in 1659, and published in the *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, they are entered as original works of Gerard of Bruges; they are certainly not later than 1520, and though I have not seen them for the last thirty years, I have little doubt that they are by Gerard David.

In all probability many more of his pictures have escaped destruction.

[1] See *Le Beffroi*, tom. III, pp. 344, 345. Bruges, 1870. There is a copy of this picture in the Museum at Stockholm.

We know that he painted for Bernardin Salviati a panel (H. 40½ in.; B. 36¾ in.) with the portrait of his mother kneeling, protected by three saints (John the Baptist, Christina and Mary Magdalene?); and another (H. 25 in.; B. 19 in.) for the Carmelite nuns of Sion at Bruges representing their father confessor, Brother Isenbart de Bru, kneeling, accompanied by S. Albert and S. Elisabeth. This panel, painted in 1518, is described in the catalogue of pictures from the suppressed convents, sold in 1785 as highly finished; it was nevertheless sold to a dealer named Loose for tenpence. I know not what has become of these two works.

The Hohenzollern collection at Sigmaringen contains two shutters of a triptych (H. 30½ in.; B. 25¾ in.), formerly in the Weyer collection, representing the Annunciation; the angel on the right panel, the Virgin on the left. The scene is laid in a wainscotted room. Mary, in a greenish-blue dress and mantle, kneels, her hands crossed on her breast, at a carved prayer-desk, on which is an open book; its cover and a rosary lie on the pavement; to the right is the emblematic lily in a fine two-handled majolica vase, and in the background, a bedstead with lilac curtains. On the other panel Gabriel, in girded alb and cope of crimson and gold brocade, lined with shot silk, advances with a sceptre in his left hand, and with his right uplifted as he delivers his message. This is a very fine painting, highly finished; the style of the figures and the colouring are quite in the manner of Gerard's later works. A replica with variations in the colouring and the accessories (H. 16 in. B. 12½ in.) is in the Städel Institute at Frankfort.

A panel (H. 31 in.; B. 23¼in.), in the possession of Count Arco Valley, at Munich, representing the Madonna seated in a landscape surrounded by five virgin saints (SS. Katherine and Barbara on her right; SS. Dorothy, Margaret and Agnes on the left), is attributed to Gerard; as are also a replica of it (without the angels holding a crown over the B. Virgin) belonging to the Academy of S. Luke at Rome, and a similar composition, with a sixth saint added on the right opposite S. Margaret, in the Alte Pinacothek at Munich. These are all early sixteenth century imitations of the right half of a lovely diptych (H. 10 in.; B. 6¼ in.), painted by Memlinc for John du Celier, formerly in the possession of Mr. Gatteaux, now in the Louvre. Amongst other works by the same

hand we may mention a triptych in the cathedral of Bruges, representing the Presentation in the Temple, with the donors protected by SS. Philip and John the Evangelist ; and in the Alte Pinacothek at Munich a *Repose during the Flight into Egypt* and an *Adoration of the Magi.*

In the Gallery at Darmstadt is a painting on panel (H. $35\frac{3}{4}$ in. ; B. $14\frac{1}{2}$ in.), formerly in the collection of the Duke of Orleans, representing the Madonna enthroned between two groups of angels, four on the right, singing, and three on the left, one playing the harp, another the organ, of which the bellows are blown by the third. This picture, of which there was a replica in the convent of the English Franciscan nuns at Bruges (afterwards in the Van Houtten collection at Aachen), is the work of a contemporary of David, but the types of the figures, with the exception of the two musical angels, are unlike those in his authentic pictures.

The Berlin Gallery exhibits as being by David, a picture (573) formerly in the Solly collection, representing our Lord on the Cross with the B. Virgin, S. John and the three Maries on the right, and the Centurion and two soldiers on the left. It should most certainly be classed as by an unknown master. It is needless to refer here to the many other (more than forty) pictures in private hands which have been attributed to David of late years, generally with very little reason.

CHAPTER III

MINIATURES.

Gerard David was not only a painter but also a miniaturist, and as such at the head of one of the best, if not the best, school of miniature painters flourishing at Bruges at the commencement of the sixteenth century. Of his own work as a miniaturist we have two authenticated specimens, the *Preaching of John the Baptist* and the *Baptism of Christ*, formerly in the Abbey of S. Mary of the Dunes, and now in the Museum of the Academy at Bruges. In the first the Precursor is represented standing on a hillock, holding a staff in his right hand and raising his left to emphasise the exhortation he is addressing to a group of persons seated around. A little in the background Christ is seen walking towards a wood in the distance. In the second miniature, S. John, kneeling on one knee on the rocky bank of the river, is pouring water from the hollow of his hand on the head of Christ who stands in the stream. In the heavens the Eternal Father is seen blessing His Son. Deer are browsing beneath the trees, and swans are on the stream.

Of David's wife's work we have three splendid examples, also formerly in the abbey of the Dunes and now in the possession of Mr. Henry Willett, of Arnold House, Brighton, which when I first saw them nearly forty years ago were in a sixteenth-century frame protected by talc.[1] In the central picture the Blessed Virgin, seen full face and as far as the knees, is seated in the immediate front on a bank overgrown with herbage and flowers. She wears a bright deep blue dress with loose sleeves lined with grey fur, showing at the wrists the tight sleeves of a brown underdress lined with green, and a little linen; a large red

[1] They were then at Bruges in the possession of M. Louis Tangnes, and were attributed to Hans Memlinc. At his sale on May 31st, 1870, they fetched 960 frs.

mantle, thrown over her shoulders falls in graceful folds on each side. Her light brown hair, confined by a band of black velvet, embroidered with gold and bordered with pearls, falls in wavy tresses over her shoulders, but is partly covered by a white neckerchief. With her right arm and hand she supports the Infant Christ seated on her lap with a linen cloth wrapped about Him. His left arm rests on His Mother's shoulder, while he clutches her neckerchief with his right hand. He has a glory of rays around His head, but the Virgin's is encircled with a semi-transparent nimbus of brush-gold. Both Mother and Child are of quite a different type to those in Gerard's pictures, and I do not remember to have met with them in any Bruges painting, so that this may very probably be an original composition of his wife's. To the left of the Virgin is seen a pond at which a stag is slaking its thirst in the shade of a couple of trees ; a little further off is a peacock, perched on a trellis fence. The centre of the background is occupied by a gabled mansion which shuts off the greater portion of the distant view, but on the right beyond a wall and gateway, we get a glimpse of upland landscape with a cottage at the side of a winding road leading up to a castle on the summit. In the courtyard on the right of the mansion is a richly carved stone Gothic fountain with four bronze statuettes, in front of which is an angel, another stands on the doorsteps. The buildings in this view represent, but freely, the old castle and country house of Louis de Gruuthuuse, Earl of Winchester, at Oostcamp near Bruges.

The right wing is occupied by a nearly full-length figure of S. Katherine standing in the immediate foreground of a meadow. She wears a loose-sleeved dress of cloth of gold lined with blue, adorned at the edges and down the front with precious stones between two rows of pearls. Cut square at the neck it shows the border of a crimson bodice, and a plaited cambric habit-shirt edged with a narrow band of gold, coming up to the throat. A light blue mantle lined with crimson cast over her shoulders, is kept in its place by a gold cordon fastened to two jewelled buttons. With her right arm pressed against her side she holds up the end of her mantle and the skirt of her dress, while her hand rests on the pommel of a sword, in the other hand she carries a book covered with red cloth on which her eyes are fixed. Her long light brown hair falls loosely over

The Blessed Virgin and Infant Christ.
Miniature from Triptych, by the wife of Gerard David. Mr. Henry Willett's Collection.

her shoulders and is kept off her face by a rich gold headdress with a coronet set with precious stones. A wheel-shaped jewel is attached to a cord round her neck, while the wheel of torture lies at her feet. In the background are trees and a palatial castle in front of which the martyrdom of the saint is taking place in the presence of a king and nobleman on horseback with an attendant page and a couple of soldiers ; the saint, blindfolded is kneeling on her mantle, and the executioner is raising his sword to strike the fatal blow ; two angels hold the mantle and are waiting to transport her body to Mount Sinai. On one of the chimney tops of the palace are two storks. On the left wing S. Barbara stands facing S. Katherine. She is clothed in a full-sleeved blue dress open in front to the waist but laced with a gold cord across the bodice of a crimson underdress cut square at the neck showing a white linen neckerchief. An ample white mantle shaded with red and bordered with gold embroidery, and a rich coronet of gold set with precious stones and pearls, and adorned in front with a little tower complete her costume. Her long brown hair falls in masses over her shoulders. In her right hand she carries a small round tower of metal, and with her left holds up her mantle. The meadow in which she stands is shut in by a hurdle fence and two trees, a willow and a tall poplar. Beyond is a hilly landscape with rocks on the left. In the further background are sheep and two shepherds, one of whom is pointing to the rocks, down the road at the foot of which the saint is being dragged by the hair by her cruel father, who in the mid-distance is again represented in the act of beheading her.

At the foot of each of these miniatures there is an ornamental band ; that below S. Katherine, coloured crimson, is occupied by two kneeling angels, vested in albs, supporting an escucheon with the arms of the abbot for whom it was painted ; the other is adorned with a red rose, a pansy, a caterpillar, and a fly on a ground of brush gold.

The heads in all three miniatures are very beautiful, and the hands well modelled. The figures of SS. Katherine and Barbara, which occur again and again in Breviaries, Hours, and other devotional books, are copied from Gerard David's paintings.

Besides the above, there are a large number of very fine illuminated manuscripts, executed in Bruges, some of the miniatures in which are copied from Gerard's designs. He was for more than a quarter of a

century the leading artist at Bruges, but inasmuch as the majority of the miniaturists worked not from nature but from patterns, it is extremely difficult, in the absence of documentary evidence, to say for certain by whom any particular work was executed.

It is commonly supposed that many of the fine manuscripts executed at this period were written in Italy and Spain, and sent to the Netherlands to be adorned by the illuminator and miniaturist. This is quite contrary to fact. The fine vellum of which these books are composed was a Netherlandish specialty, and so far at least as Bruges is concerned, there were residing in the town French, North Italian, and Spanish professional calligraphers who were constantly engaged in writing Missals, Breviaries, and Books of Hours for exportation. There were also a large number of illuminators whose business it was to paint the initial letters and ornamental borders. There were also the miniaturists, a few of whom were master-painters. It may be as well if I add here a list of such of these as were working in Bruges in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

1. Didier de la Riviere, a native of Langres in the duchy of Burgundy, who settled in Bruges and purchased the right of citizenship on November 8th, 1475. He was admitted as an illuminator into the gild of S. John in 1476, and as master-painter into that of SS. Luke and Eligius on September 15th, 1506. He died in 1509.[1]

2. Adrian de Raet, *alias* Vrelant, a pupil of the well-known miniaturist William Vrelant, admitted into the gild of S. John in 1475, and as master-painter into that of S. Luke on August 11th, 1511. He died in 1534.[2]

3. Adrian Fabiaen, son of the painter John Fabiaen, admitted as master-painter on July 17th, 1519, and into the gild of S. John as miniaturist in 1536, died in December, 1545. His wife joined the gild as illuminator in 1533.[2]

4. William Wallinc, son of the painter Michael Wallinc, admitted as master-painter on October 28th, 1506, and into the gild of S. John as miniaturist in 1527; he died in March, 1553.[3]

[1] See Le Beffroi, II, 301.

[2] He had a brother, Donatian, who was admitted as master-painter on January 30th, 1510, and died in 1521. Their father died in 1520.

[3] See Le Beffroi, III, 231–235.

Wings of Triptych, by the wife of Gerard David. Mr. Willett's Collection.

S. Katherine. *S. Barbara.*

5. Fabian de Maniere, admitted as master-painter on August 23rd, 1500, and into the gild of S. John as miniaturist in 1519. He died in 1556.

6. Simon Bynnynck, or Benninc, son of Alexander and Katherine van der Goes, born at Antwerp, illuminator and miniaturist, visited Bruges from time to time in 1508, 1512, and 1516; he settled there definitely in 1518 and purchased the right of citizenship in 1519. Francis of Holland (quoted by Raczynski, *Les Arts en Portugal*, p. 55) writing about miniaturists, speaks of him thus: "Master Simon was of all the Flemings the most graceful colourist, and painted trees and distances better than any other." Guicciardini and Vasari also mention him among the miniaturists of the first half of the sixteenth century. He died in 1561.[1] His only authenticated works are a miniature of the *Crucifixion* (H. 12 in., B. 7½ in.) in a Missal in the Archives at Dixmude, painted by him in 1530, and the *Genealogy of the Royal House of Portugal*, eleven sheets of which are preserved in the British Museum (Add. MS. 12531), commenced in 1530 by order of the Infante Don Fernando; these remained unfinished at the death of that prince in 1534.

These are the authors of the best miniatures produced in Bruges from 1500 to 1530; but as no authenticated work of any of them, except David and his wife and Simon Benninc, has yet been identified, we must be content to wait until further documents are unearthed.

One of the finest and best known books adorned with miniatures, produced in Bruges during this period, is the so-called *Grimani Breviary* now at Venice, which was executed for a regular canon, as is proved by the inscription in the calendar of the feasts of S. Guarinus, S. Bernard, and S. Ubaldus, on February 6th and May 15th and 16th; for although the first of these feasts was kept throughout the diocese of Bologna, the second in several dioceses of the north of Italy, and the third throughout Umbria, the regular canons alone kept all the three.[2] The presence of a number of Franciscan saints tend to make one think that the particular canon for whom the book was executed was affiliated to the Order of S. Francis as a Tertiary. As to its date, I am very

[1] See Le Beffroi, II, 306–319, and III, 118–119.

[2] The feast of S. Isidore, martyr, is here on April 16th, on which day it was kept, I believe, only in the diocese of Venice.

strongly inclined to put it at the commencement of the sixteenth century, or, at earliest, quite at the close of the fifteenth : SS. Bernard, Peter, and companions (March 19th) were canonised on August 6th, 1481 ; the feast of S. Joseph (March 19th) was raised to the rank of a minor double in 1490, and then for the Franciscans only, so that the writing of the book cannot have been commenced until after that date. How soon after it was commenced is a matter of opinion, but, as far as I can judge from careful comparison of the photographs with other miniatures and with paintings, I am convinced that these cannot have been executed much before 1510. A few of the volumes illustrated by the same miniaturists have retained their original stamped covers, and these are all the work of sixteenth century Bruges binders.

The *Grimani Breviary* consists of 831 leaves of fine vellum. The calendar takes up twenty-four pages. Twelve of these have full-page miniatures, the other twelve being occupied by the calendar in two columns enclosed within an architecturesque framework of bronze adorned with single figures of the saints, or with groups representing the mysteries commemorated during the month ; at the head are the signs of the zodiac, and at the foot, a scene illustrating the occupations and amusements of the season. The full-page miniatures present scenes of a similar character. These are remarkably fine, but it must not be supposed that they are original compositions, for such is not the case. The choice of the subjects which illustrate the different months is coeval with the introduction of pictorial calendars. The compositions date at least from the commencement of the fifteenth century ; if for instance the December miniature be compared with that in the *Hours of John, Duke of Berry*, belonging to the Duke of Aumale (reproduced in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, tom. xxix, p. 401, 1884), it will be seen that not only is the general arrangement identical, but that the grouping of both the huntsmen and the dogs is the same, as are also the various species and colours of the latter ; the costumes vary, and the architecture in the background is Netherlandish of the fifteenth instead of French of the fourteenth ; the trees in the wood too are not growing so close together, space having been made for additional members of the hunting party and for two dogs. The representation, at the head of each miniature, of the Almighty as the Ancient of Days (Daniel vii, 9, and Psalm xviii, 6),

holding an orb and with his right hand raised in the act of blessing, seated in a canopied chariot drawn by two winged horses, is also no new

SS. Katherine, Cecilia, Barbara, and other Virgin Saints. Grimani Breviary.

feature. The artists who executed the miniatures in the *Duke of Berry's Hours* are known; Pol de Limbourg and his brothers, Netherlanders,

who may very likely have been recommended to the duke by his friend Lubert Hautschilt, twenty-fourth abbot of S. Bartholomew's, better known as the Eeckhout, at Bruges, a house of canons regular of the order of S. Augustin founded in the first half of the eleventh century in a forest of oak trees—whence its common name—then just outside the town. Hautschilt was a learned mathematician and astronomer ; in 1398 he constructed a zodiac with figures of the planets adapted to a globe, the whole kept in motion by clockwork. At the request of Cardinal Peter d'Ailly, Bishop of Cambrai, he revised the memoir on the reform of the calendar dedicated by that prelate to John XXIII in 1411. He also rebuilt a great part of his abbey, and enriched its library with numerous manuscripts. The duke made him a member of his council, and kept up a constant correspondence with him, often presenting him with ecclesiastical vessels and vestments ; the abbot on the other hand sending the duke rare birds, vases and manuscripts ; he also dedicated to him a translation of William de Guilleville's *Romant des trois Pélérinages*, and had the presentation copy adorned with beautiful miniatures.[1] It was in the abbey of the Eeckhout that the gild of S. John had its chapel and held its meetings, and thus we have a connecting link between the miniatures in the two calendars ; the original patterns, or copies of them, no doubt remained at Bruges.

The text of the Breviary is adorned with sixty-eight large and eighteen small miniatures ; of the former fifteen occupy the entire page the remainder have borders at the sides and foot ; twenty-four of these are made up of little pictures ; twenty-five are adorned with cut flower sprays, butterflies and insects, painted with the greatest care ; the other four are divided into compartments containing jewellery either enamelled or set with precious stones. The pages on which the smaller miniatures occur also have similar borders.

Many of these miniatures contain figures copied from paintings by David or other masters ; thus the group of *Our Lady surrounded by five Virgin Saints* (91) is a free copy of a picture now in the Academy of S. Luke at Rome ; the landscape background is, however, far finer than in that picture or in either of the replicas at Munich. The *S. Barbara* (108) is copied from the same painting. The *Holy Trinity* (42) is so

[1] See my notice of this abbot in *La Flandre*, tome III, pp. 281–286. Bruges, 1869.

S. Anthony. Grimani Breviary.

far as the figures are concerned an exact copy of a painting which thirty years ago was at Bruges in private hands. The figures of the Apostles assisting at the death of the B. Virgin (87) were certainly inspired by a beautiful little picture in the National Gallery (N°. 658), formerly attributed to Martin Schongauer. The smaller miniatures in the borders are in more than one instance (*e.g.*, the interment scene at the foot of 58) repetitions of similar compositions in a prayer-book executed *c.* 1460 for Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, now in the Bodleian (Douce 219,220).

We reproduce here seven miniatures, which are either original works of Gerard's, or copies from his designs.

1. *A Group of Virgin Saints;* the identity of the three foremost only is fixed by characteristic emblems. S. Cecilia, in the centre, holds a pair of silver organs in her right hand, and wears a blue dress bordered round the neck with a bright red galloon, embroidered with gold letters. Her hair, which falls over her shoulders, is confined by a band of green velvet, adorned with a single row of pearls, and fastened over the forehead with a jewel. On her right, S. Katherine, her right hand resting on the pommel of a sword, is reading a book supported on her left forearm. Her robe of cloth of gold has full sleeves lined with white and yellow shot silk, and is bordered with a double row of pearls; over it she wears a light blue mantle, kept in place by a cordon attached to two jewelled buttons. Her throat is protected by a white chemisette. A blue headdress, on which is set a richly-jewelled coronet, and a girdle with a jewelled fastening complete her costume. On the left, S. Barbara, in a light-green dress, open in front, and laced across the chest over a bodice of cloth of gold, has a rose-coloured mantle bordered with gold-embroidered letters, and carries a little gold cylindrical tower. Her hair is confined by a richly-jewelled coronet. Of the other virgins little more than their heads is seen; all have nimbs of semi-transparent brush gold. The background is of pure gold. The border, iron grey, is adorned with cut roses and butterflies.

2. *S. Anthony*, clad in a monastic habit and rose-coloured skull-cap, is represented walking at the side of a wood. In his left hand he carries a book, whilst his right rests on a staff to which a bell is attached; in front of him is a pig. Devils are flying away through the air. In the

In nativitate. s. iohis
baptē adnūs: aīa
Nē pībit ante illū
i spū & virtute helye parare
domino plebē pfectā: ; Nē
Dicat dominus: In fine

S. John the Baptist. Grimani Breviary.

mid-distance is a river with islands, and beyond it a town. The border, in brown heightened with gold, presents three scenes from the life of the saint. At the foot, on the right, he is seen seated reading, undisturbed by the wild beasts gathered around him; on the left, he is tempted by two women, one of whom, richly dressed, is offering him a golden goblet. Higher up he is represented conversing with S. Paul the hermit.

3. *S. John Baptist*, represented in a wooded landscape advancing towards the front along the grassy bank of a river; on his right are three disciples, two of whom are leaving him to follow Christ, who is seen in the half distance walking away, his hands joined in prayer. The Baptist is clothed in a garment of camel skin and a red mantle. The disciple nearest to him has a red tunic, a blue cape, and an olive green mantle; his companion, a yellow tunic; the third a grey tunic and brown head cover. Our Lord is clothed in a blue tunic. On the border two scenes are represented; at the foot, on the right, S. John, kneeling on one knee, is baptising Christ, who stands in the stream; on the left he is preaching to a crowd from a wooden pulpit set up at the foot of tall trees.

4. *S. Mary Magdalene.*—The saint is represented seated at the foot of a steep rock, on the summit of which are a few trees and bushes. Her hands rest on a book which lies open on her knees. Her only garment is an ample rose-coloured mantle, over which her long hair falls loosely. At her side, on the ground, is her emblem, the vase of precious ointment. Above her is the entrance to a grotto; a stream gushing from the rocks on the extreme right, flows across the foreground and winds its way towards the sea in the distance. High up in the air six angels are seen bearing the saint's soul to heaven. At the edge of a wood, on the further side of the stream, is a monk looking up in wonder. The landscape is enlivened by the introduction of several animals. Out at sea is seen a ship.

5. *S. Christopher*, represented as a man of gigantic stature, standing in a river holding a pole in his right hand, and with his left arm trying to lift the Infant Christ, who stands on the rocky bank with his arm round the saint's neck. Christopher has a blue tunic and a rose-coloured mantle picked out with gold; the Child, a light blue tunic. The rocks and shrubs in the background on the left are painted with great skill and

S. Mary Magdalene. Grimani Breviary.

fidelity to nature, as is also the river on which are several ships; beyond it are buildings. The border of brush gold is divided by entwined stems into oval compartments, tinted alternately green, pink, and blue, in each of which is suspended a jewel.

6. *S. Michael*, a half-length figure with outstretched wings, seen full face; he is clad in girdled alb, amice, scarlet stole embroidered with letters of gold, and a cope of crimson and gold velvet brocade, lined with green silk and bordered with orfreys embroidered with figures of saints in canopied niches between two rows of pearls; the morse of gold adorned with pearls bears a sculptured representation of the Eternal Father seated on a throne. The archangel holds an uplifted sword, and in his left hand bears a crystal staff surmounted by a jewelled cross of gold, from which floats a banner with a figure of S. Michael about to smite Satan, on whose prostrate form he is standing. In the background are legions of angels. The border is adorned with strawberry blossoms and fruit and butterflies, on a yellow ground heightened with gold.

7. *S. Francis of Assisi*, clothed in an olive green habit, girt with a knotted cord, is kneeling in the foreground in devout ecstasy before the mystic seraph and receiving the stigmata, the rays passing to the saint's hands and feet and side being like golden threads of light; a little further off is Brother Leo, who has fallen asleep while sitting at the foot of a rock, from which a small stream bursts out in the immediate front. In the background are a couple of trees and a landscape view partly shut out by rocks. The border is adorned with cut flowers, damask roses and sweet peas, with butterflies on a light red ground.

I would also draw the reader's special attention to the three following:—

8. *The Visitation.*—The scene is represented as taking place in an enclosed garden. Mary, in blue dress and mantle, with a white linen veil, has just entered by a gateway on the right. S. Elisabeth, who has come out to meet her, is greeting her, while the aged Zachary, cap and staff in hand, stands a little way off to the left. Elisabeth wears a robe of crimson heightened with gold, bordered with white fur, over a tight-fitting dress of cloth of gold. A linen headdress with a peach-coloured veil and a golden girdle complete her costume. Zachary wears a blue

S. Christopher. Grimani Breviary.

S. Michael. Grimani Breviary.

tunic girt with a leathern belt. In the background is a mansion, and beyond it a hill with a castle, the same view as in the central piece of Mr. Willett's triptych.

9. *S. Jerome*, represented seated at the foot of a clump of trees reading a book, which lies open on his knees. He is dressed as a cardinal in a crimson cappa lined with sheepskin, and a violet skull-cap; a lion reposes at his side, and a cardinal's hat and a skull lie on the ground before him. In the background are trees, a cottage, and a church at the foot of a steep rock. The border is adorned with white roses, butterflies, a caterpillar, and a snail on a pink ground.

10. *Our Lady and Child.*—This is one of the most exquisite figures in the whole book. The Virgin, seen to the knees, is seated facing the spectator, supporting with both her hands her divine Son, who, with his arms around her neck, is apparently about to give her a loving kiss. Mary wears, over a tight-fitting dress of cloth of gold, a blue robe lined with grey plush, and a red mantle bordered with gold embroidery. Her hair, which falls in luxuriant masses over her shoulders, is confined by a red riband embroidered with gold and bordered with pearls, fastened over the forehead by a jewel set with precious stones. The Child is clothed in a simple white tunic. The meadow in which the Virgin is seated is thickly grown with herbage and white flowers. In the half-distance on each side are trees; at the foot of these on the left shepherds are keeping watch over their sheep. Beyond the meadow is a winding road on which is an ass followed by a peasant; a wooded landscape occupies the background.

In all these miniatures the Divine Persons, the Blessed Virgin, and the angels have rays of gold around their heads, while the saints have semi-transparent nimbs of brush gold.

The National Bavarian Museum at Munich possesses two *Books of Hours*, adorned by miniaturists of the same school; one, contemporary with if not a little earlier than the *Grimani Breviary*, belonged to Joan of Castile, the queen of Philip the Handsome, who married her in 1496; the other is rather later.

Among the many fine manuscripts in the Imperial Library at Vienna are two prayer-books, a *Hortulus animae* (2706) and a *Book of Hours* (1588), bound by Louis Bloc of Bruges, both of which contain minia-

S. Francis of Assisi. Grimani Breviary.

tures exactly like those in the *Grimani Breviary*. Another very fine *Book of Hours*, dating from about 1515, which passed into the possession of Albert of Brandenburg and is now in private possession, contains 123 miniatures by the same artists, many of them exact repetitions of those in the Breviary, while the portrait of St. Bernardin of Siena is identical with that in the wing of the Salviati altar-piece.[1]

A very fine Breviary written for Isabella, daughter of the Infante Ferdinand, Duke of Viseu, and wife of John II., King of Portugal, who was a member of the third order of S. Francis. This book, which passed at the end of the sixteenth century into the possession of the Archbishop of Braga, contains over sixty large miniatures and a number of borders by the same hands. It is now in private possession.

I should also mention here an exquisite little miniature representing the Descent of the Holy Ghost on the Blessed Virgin and the Apostles, formerly in the collection of M. Guillon of Roermond, and now in that of Mr. Alfred de Pass at Finchley.

A beautiful little *Book of Hours*, executed *c.* 1530 for the Abbey of Messines in West Flanders, now in the British Museum, bound by Louis Bloc of Bruges, and a prayer-book written by Anthony van Damme, calligrapher of Bruges, in 1531, in private possession, contain miniatures evidently copied from the same patterns but by other hands.

[1] The Library at Cassel contains copies of many of these miniatures of somewhat later date and inferior execution, bearing a cipher HB, assumed by some writers to be that of Gerard Horenbault of Ghent ! !

INDEX

Aachen, 46
Adamnovitz, M., 34
Ailly, Peter d' (Bishop of Cambray), 58
Albert of Brandenburg, 70
,, ,, Oudewater, painter, 8
Alckmaer, 7
Antwerp, 6, 39, 42
,, Museum, 39
Artaria, M., 34
"Assumption of the Virgin, The," 32—34, 39
Aumâle, Duc d', 56

Balfour, Col. Henry, 27 (note)
"Baptism of Christ, The," 20, 23, 24, 27, 36, 39, 47
Barrett, Thomas, 17
Bartholomew of Milan, 13
Bellegambe, John, painter, 5
Benninc, Simon, painter and illuminator, 6, 55
Berlin Museum, 8, 46
Bernal collection, 13 (note)
Berthels (picture dealer), 27
Beurnonville collection, 17
Bles, Henry, painter, 5
Bloc, Louis, bookbinder, 68, 70
Blondeel, Lancelot, painter, 6
Bodleian Library, 60
Bologna, 55
"Book of Hours of John, Duke of Berry," 56, 57
Bouchoute, Nicholas de, 16
Bouts, Dirk, painter, 5, 8, 40
Braga, Archbishop of, 70
British Museum, 55, 70
Bru, Isembart de, 45
Bruges, 6—8, 10, 14, 20, 27, 39, 40, 42
Bruges, 43, 47, 51, 52, 55, 68, 70
Bruges, (Academy), 46
,, (Church of S. Basil), 42, 43
,, (Church of S. Donatian), 15, 43
,, (Abbey of the Eeckhout), 56
,, (Law Courts), 13 (note)
Brussels, 27, 44
,, (Museum), 27
Burgundy, 52
Burgundy, Duke of, 6, 60
Bynnynck, Simon, *see* Benninc

"Canon and his patron Saints, A," 18—20
Cassel (Library), 70 note
Cavalcaselle, 5
Claeissens, Antony, 13
Cnoop, Cornelia, 14, 31, 47, 55
Cnoop, James, 14
,, Katherine, 14
Conway, W. M., 5
Cristus, Peter, painter and illuminator, 5, 6
Crowe, 7

David, Barbara, 14
David, Gerard, earliest mention of, 6; his birth and parentage, 7; admitted as master in Gilds of S. Luke and S. Eligius, 7; his probable training at Harlem, 8; his first authenticated works, 8, 9; his marriage with Cornelia Cnoop, 14; his pious benefactions, 14, 27; visits Antwerp, and is enrolled in the Gild of S. Luke, 39; his pupils, 44; his skill as a miniaturist, 47, 58, 60; his death and burial, 14
David, John, 7
Damme, Antony van, 70
Darmstadt Gallery, 46
De Chantraines, James, 27 (note)
De Corte, John, 20
De la Bye, Anne, 43
De la Pasture, *see* Van der Weyden
De la Rivière, Didier, painter and illuminator, 52
Denterghem, Mme. de, 32
"Deposition, The" (altarpiece), 40—42
De Raet, Adrian, painter and illuminator, 52
Des Trompes, John, 20, 23, 24, 27
De Visch, van der Capelle, Richard, 14, 17
Dixmude, 55
Du Celier, John, 45
Dürer, Albert, 33

Eastlake, Sir Charles, 18
"Execution of Sisamnes, The," 20
Eyck, John van, painter, 5, 6, 40

Fabiaen, Adrian, painter and miniaturist, 52
,, Donatian, painter, 52 (note)
,, John, painter, 52
Fernando (Infante of Spain), 55
Flanders, 5, 6, 8, 40
Florence (Uffizi), 27 (note)
France, 8
Francfort (Städel Institute), 45
Francis of Holland, 55

Gatteaux, M., 45
Gazette des Beaux Arts, 56
Genoa (Municipal Palace), 33, 36
Gerard, Mark, painter, 44
,, of Bruges, *see* David

Gerard, of S. John's, 7, 8, 40
Ghent, 6
Giustiniani, The Marchese, 17
Goes, Hugo van der, painter, 17
Gossaert, John, painter, 13, 17
Grancey-le-Château (Côte d'Or), 32
Grandeel, Mary, 44
Grandeel Peter, 44
"Grimani Breviary, The," 55—68, 70
Gros, John de, 8
Gruuthuuse, Louis de, 48
Guicciardini, 6, 7, 55
Guilleville, William de, 58
Guillon, M., 70

Haerne, Clementina de, 44
,, John de, 44
Harlem, 7, 8
Hautschilt, Lubert, 58
Horebout, Gerard, painter and iiluminator, 7, 13 70 (note)
Houtten, Van, collection, 46
Hurembout, Luke, 6

Isabella of Portugal, 70
Isenbrant, Adrian, painter, 7, 44
Italy, 52

Joan of Castile, 10, 68
John XXIII., 58
"Judgement of Cambyses, The," 9, 10, 13, 20

Kugler, 5

Lanchals, Peter, 8, 9
Lee Priory collection, 17
Leopold, William, Archduke, 44
Limbourg, Pol de, illuminator, 57
Loose (picture dealer), 45
Louvre, The, 42, 45

Mabuse, *see* Gossaert
Madonna with S. Jerome and a Benedictine," 34
,, with S. Katherine and other Saints," 15–17
,, with SS. Katherine, Dorothea, &c.," 27, 28, 31, 32
Mander, Karel van, 6, 7, 8
Maniere, Fabian de, 55
Marinus of Siressa, 6
Marmion, Simon, painter and illuminator, 5
"Marriage Feast at Cana, The," (altar-piece), 42, 43, 44
Maximilian, 8
Memlinc, Hans, painter, 5, 8, 40, 45, 47 (note)
Messines, Abbey of, 70
Metsys, Quentin, painter, 42
Middelburg, 25
Miliotti, M., 27
Munich, 45, 46, 58
,, (National Museum), 68
,, (Pinacothek), 64

National Gallery, 17, 18, 60
Nieuport, 13 (note)

Oostcamp, 48
Oudewater, 7, 8

Paris, 13 (note), 17, 27
Pass, Mr. Alfred de, 70
Patenir, Joachim, painter, 5, 39, 40
Philip the Handsome, 10, 68
Pourbus, Peter, painter, 7
"Preaching of John the Baptist, The," 47
Prevost, John, painter, 5

Raczinsky, 55
Robinson, Sir J. C., 18
Rome (Academy of S. Luke), 45, 58
Rossem, Christina van, 17
Rouen, 14, 27, 32, 34

"Saint Michael overcoming Satan" (altarpiece), 34—36
Salviati, Bernardin, 17, 18, 45
Sanderus, 7
Schongauer, M., painter, 60
Smet, Jodoc de, 20
Solly Collection, 46
Spain, 52
Spronc, James, 20
Stephens, Mrs. Lyne, 17

Tangnes, M. Louis, 47 (note)

Valley, Count Arco, 45
Van der Straeten, John, 42
Van der Weyden, Roger, painter, 5, 27 (note), 40
Vasari, 6, 7, 55
Venice, 55
Vienna Gallery, 8, 34, 39
,, Library, 68
Vrelant, William, miniaturist, 52
,, *see* Raet

Waagen, 5, 7
Wallinc, Michael, painter, 52
,, William, painter and illuminator, 52
Walpole, Horace, 17
Weyer Collection, 45
White, W. Benoni, 18
Willett, Mr. Henry, 46, 68

3 9001 02411 3899